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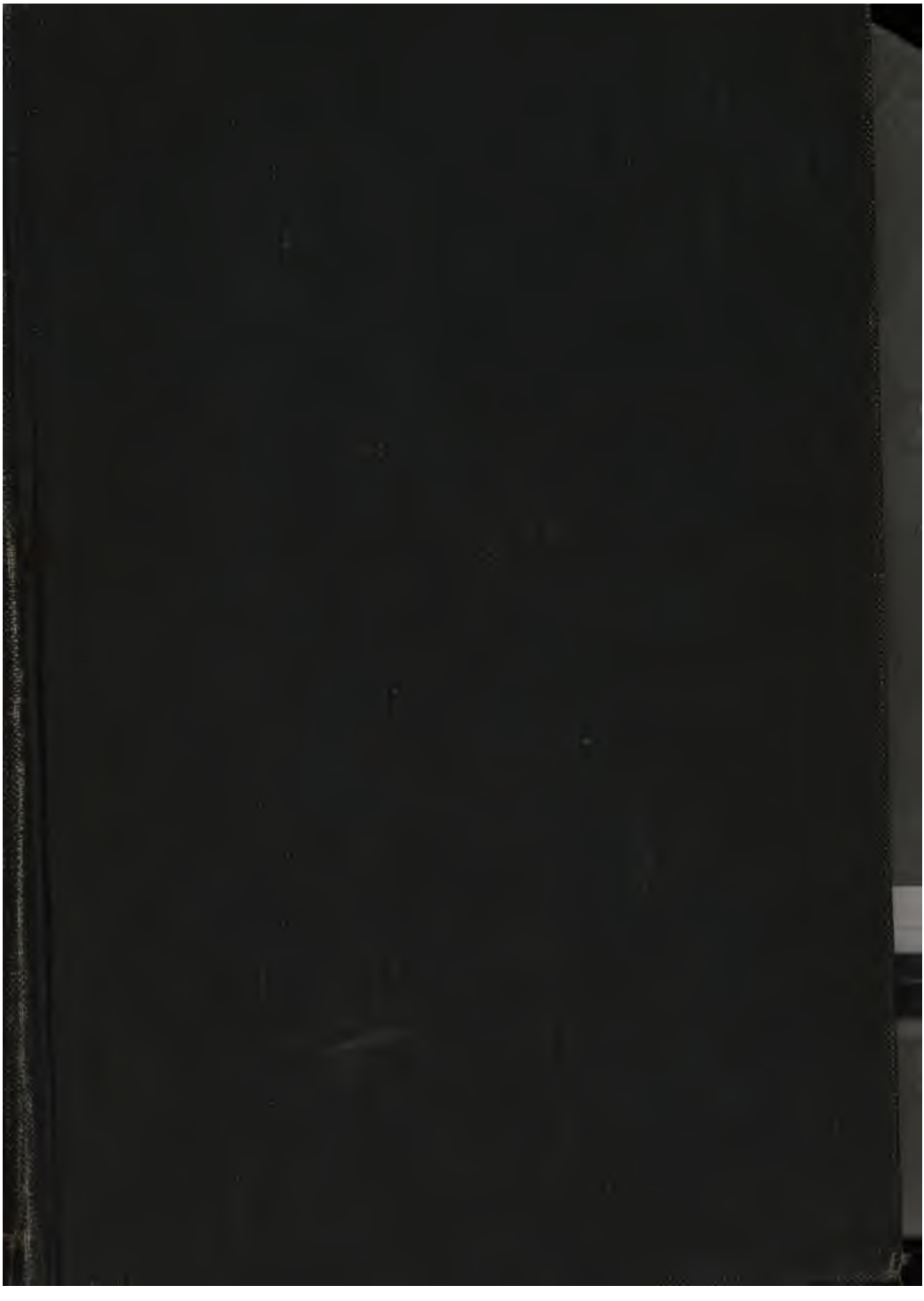
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"THE CRUISER FIRED SIGNALS FOR US TO HEAVE TO; BUT WE PAID NO ATTENTION TO THEM"

A CAPTAIN UNAFRAID

THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF
DYNAMITE JOHNNY O'BRIEN

AS SET DOWN BY
HORACE SMITH
AUTHOR OF "THE WAR MAKER"



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A CAPTAIN UNAFRAID

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I

THE LURE OF TROUBLED WATERS

WITH an unbridled passion for the sea and the love of adventure which it engendered, it was inevitable that I should drift into filibustering. It is only fair to say, however, that I have not been recklessly running around smashing statutes and setting all of society's regulations at defiance. I have never knowingly violated any law except the one against filibustering, and that I regard as an immoral instrument, for the reason that it seeks to destroy the spirit of liberty, while its only effect is to promote perjury. Not that I have ever been compelled to perjure myself or to procure false witnesses to avoid conviction on the charges that have been brought against me, but it generally happens that it is only through testimony which, at least, does not fully state the exact facts that filibusters escape punishment. If the

United States law against filibustering had been effectively enforced—and let it be recorded here, before the unfolding of secrets begins, that its avoidance was accomplished through no shadow of connivance at Washington, for every instrument at the hand of this government was exerted to the utmost to prevent its infraction and to maintain an attitude of strict neutrality—Cuba might still be the victim of Spain's murderous misrule, the acquisition of our entering wedge into the West Indies—Porto Rico—would have been postponed for years, and the Filipinos might still be fighting with each other and the Spaniards.

Laws against filibustering are eminently fitting in monarchial lands. No emperor, whether ruling by divine right or right of might, wants to see another emperor dethroned, and, perhaps, compelled to work for a living along with the unanointed, for fear of the effect the proceeding may have on his own subjects; but such antiquated theories of government by suppression have no place in a republic. Filibustering, which often is misunderstood, is simply the art of surreptitiously conveying munitions of war to a people, or a part of a people, who are in rebellion against a government whose overthrow, generally speaking, is sought because it is inefficient or corrupt, or both. Ordinarily the means of warfare are held by the ruling power, so it is necessary for the insurgents to secure

their arms from the outside. It is my doctrine that this is an altogether laudable ambition, and that they should be allowed to buy all they can pay for, with no interference save from those with whom they are at war. Certainly it does not come with good grace from a country which prides itself on the principle that the will of the people is the law of the land to say to its neighbors that they shall not oppose tyranny and fight with every means in their power for what they believe to be their rights. We should not forget that we were rebels once ourselves, and warmly welcomed filibustering aid from France. The law which forbids the departure of filibustering expeditions from the territory of neutral powers is simply an act of comity between nations, and is based on no moral principle; it really amounts to one of the entangling alliances which Washington warned this country to avoid. This is not to be interpreted as an excuse for filibustering, for to no man will I make any sort of an apology for anything I have ever done; it is merely stating a theory and making plain a condition which is not clear to many people.

In the persistent and enthusiastic violation of this obnoxious law I worked much harder and for much less money than I could have easily earned by adhering to the life of a pilot, free from danger, but also free from excitement, whereas I could have made a fortune by running

counter to other laws, but refused to do it. It was the spirit of the thing which appealed to me; I felt that I was, to the full length of my ability and in the way to which I was best suited, helping mankind by aiding the cause of liberty, and at the same time satisfying my adventurous ambition. I tried to fight for my own country, and when that failed I fought for other countries. In the course of this long warfare I was several times arrested for filibustering, but never convicted; so, under our law, which presumes every man to be innocent until he is proven guilty, it must be considered that I am entirely innocent of the high crimes and misdemeanors to which I here confess for the first time; until now I never have told a word of what I have done or how I did it.

Whatever divergent views may be held as to the ethics of filibustering, there will be no disagreement as to the proposition that it is extremely hazardous business. This was particularly true with reference to the Cuban revolution, for there we were constantly watched and harassed by the United States government through its navy, Revenue Cutter Service, and customs officers, special Treasury agents, and its powerful Secret Service, in addition to the Spanish authorities with their war-ships, Pinkerton detectives, and an army of spies, to say nothing of the Spanish forces in Cuba. Naturally, in the course of my activities, I have

figured in many dangerous situations. More than once I have been at such close grapples with death that my escape seemed miraculous. Yet I have never been afraid I can recall no time when the presence of danger excited or disturbed me. For this I claim no credit. I have always had the old-fashioned faith in God. It is my religion that a man should do the best he can in everything, and let the Almighty take care of the rest of it. That belief gives one a clear conscience. People tell me I have outraged governments. This may be. But I have never knowingly wronged a fellow-man.

After all, what is bravery, if not an inborn quality—the heritage of clean lives, of fighting blood and unweakened nerves? The world is full of it. And if some portion of this heritage has been mine I am grateful, for in my warring days there were times—many of them—when, had I been afraid to die, I should undoubtedly have found myself without delay in Davy Jones's Locker. Bravery is confined to no longitude or latitude, and knows no race. I have found brave men everywhere, as will presently be told, and it was my fortune to be intimately associated with some of the best of them. Sometimes we were accused of recklessness. If by this is meant foolish running into danger without taking account of the odds, the accusation will not stand. I have taken some long chances in my life, but I always knew exactly what I

was doing and precisely what the probabilities of success were, even though it frequently took quick thinking to figure them out in a few seconds. It is at such times that one needs all of his wits, and only the fool loses them.

I was born in the old "Dry Dock" section of New York, almost on the bank of the East River, on April 20, 1837. My parents came from the County Longford, Ireland, where they were neighbors of and related to the parents of Gen. Phil. Sheridan. The O'Brien and Sheridan families, so my mother told me, came to this country on the same ship not long before I was born, and my father turned from farmer to machinist. George Steer's shipyard, at which the famous yacht *America* and all of the Sandy Hook pilot-boats were built, was only a block from my home, and other yards celebrated in those days—Webb's, Brown's, Collier's, Mackey's, Westervelt's, Roosevelt & Joyce's, and English's—were clustered close about. Near by were the Morgan and Novelty iron-works, where boilers were built. But there were few steamships in those days; sailors were sailors then and machinists stayed ashore, where they belonged. Tapering spars crisscrossed the skyline, and romance was in the air. Amid such surroundings the prenatal influence was strong, and the love of ships and salt water came to me naturally.

The first thing I saw, that I can remember,

when I opened my eyes was a vessel, and almost the next thing was the sea. I saw other things, too, but none of them held my interest; ships and the sea impressed my infantile mind as the most beautiful things in the world and the most wonderful, and my opinion has never changed, except that with understanding it became a conviction. Since then I have seen much of both of them—ships of all sorts and sizes carrying everything from dress-goods to dynamite, and the sea in all of its moods and fancies. I have never known a ship that was a liar or a coward, nor have I ever seen one that, properly handled, would refuse to go where it was directed without argument or evasion. No man can want a better friend than a stanch ship, or a more delightful companion, nor, on the other hand, a braver enemy, than old ocean, out of soundings and far from the worthless worries of the little hemmed-in world ashore. Mothers learned to rock their babies from the rolling of the deep; every cradle is the unconscious manifestation of a reverence that has come down through centuries from the time when man, virile and virtuous, worshiped the sea and sailed far over it in search of a fair fight and its trophies. The sea is the Creator's comforter and restorer. It is more like its Maker than man, for it is kindly most of the time, and it never seeks an unfair advantage. In its moments of anger it never strikes without warning,

and the wise man braces himself for its blows. The "toll of the sea," spoken of in fear and with bated breath, is a trifle when compared with the murders of manufacturing machinery and the wrecks that are piled up on the lee shore of competitive commerce. Those who lose their lives at sea are few, while those who find new life there are many, and there would be millions more if Doctor Neptune did not charge such small fees, for in these days the values of too many things are fixed by the prices that are paid for them.

I first crawled and then walked around the neighboring shipyards, and after school I worked in them, faithfully but without charge, spinning oakum, tending pitch-pot, or wedging treenails. At the time I considered that I assisted greatly in fitting out the *Mechanics' Own*, a schooner bought by a lot of mechanics who sailed her around to California in 1849. My brother Peter, seven years my senior, operated a ferry, which consisted of a large rowboat equipped with a sail, across to Greenpoint, and often took me with him. In this way I learned how to handle a boat, and also picked up much useful knowledge concerning Hell Gate, the well-named tricky and tortuous channel which connects Long Island Sound with the East River. The sea lust came over me so rapidly and so strongly that, without attempting to resist it, I ran away from home and school when I was thirteen years

old and signed on as cook in the fishing-sloop *Albion* under Luke Russell, a smart sailor who afterward commanded Commodore Bennett's first yacht, *Rebecca*, and won the historic race around Long Island by taking a short cut through Plum Gut, which was not barred, because it was not thought any one would attempt it. I couldn't cook a pot of water without burning it, but I could catch codfish where no one else could find them. This latter accomplishment pleased Luke more than the discovery of my inability to cook had displeased him, and I stayed with him all of one winter before Peter discovered me and took me back home.

That one taste of the mighty deep intoxicated me. There was nothing for me thereafter but the open sea, and my parents finally concluded to let me have my way about it when they became convinced that no other way would do. For several years I devoted myself to fishing, sailing yachts for owners who knew nothing about handling them, and serving as an apprentice on the old pilot-boat *Jane*. Being constitutionally disposed to give orders rather than to obey them, I took a course in navigation at the Thom School in Cherry Street to fit myself for command rank. When the Civil War began I was sailing a sloop for Edward N. Dickinson, of Far Rockaway, the famous patent lawyer. With his help I tried to secure an appointment in the navy, but failed, as I was considered too

young. I was too well acquainted with myself to enlist as an able seaman, which I was tempted to do; I knew that, when some smart young officer undertook to tell me something about which I was better qualified to give orders, there would be trouble and I would be a candidate for a court-martial. However, I kept my weather-eye open until I found what looked like a promising opportunity.

Following the consternation created by the Confederate ram *Virginia*, or *Merrimac*, as she was best known, when she sank the *Cumberland* and destroyed the *Congress* in Hampton Roads, the *Illinois*, *Vanderbilt*, *Aroga*, and *Ocean Queen*, side-wheel ocean steamships, were hurriedly despatched from New York to Norfolk, where it was proposed to use them in ramming the strange new craft that had spread terror through the Federal fleet. This plan was suggested to President Lincoln by old Commodore Vanderbilt, who presented the ship bearing his name to the government to aid in its execution. Through the influence of Mr. Dickinson I was appointed third officer of the *Illinois*. She was commanded by Captain Babcock, a fine old fighting skipper who had lost all sense of fear while running a clipper ship out to the pirate-infested China Sea. The first officer was a man named Deacon, who was afterward commodore of the Alexander Line; and the second officer was an adopted son of Mr. Stetson, who was then

running the Astor House. They all knew their business and were itching for a good fight. The four ships went down to Hampton Roads together. When we arrived, the *Merrimac* was around back of Lambert's Point undergoing repairs from her clash with the *Monitor*, and the Federal fleet, which comprised nearly twenty vessels, was lined up from Fortress Monroe out to the Rip Raps, covering the landing of General George B. McClellan's army of nine thousand men at Yorktown. Rear-Admiral Goldsborough was in command of the fleet, and his flag-ship was the *Minnesota*.

The plan for ramming the *Merrimac* with one of the four ships sent down for that particular purpose was carefully prepared. It was arranged that the little *Monitor*, which could be handled very quickly, while her iron-clad rival, on account of her much greater length and deeper draft, was slow and cumbersome in her movements, was to advance at the first favorable opportunity and surround the *Merrimac* with a cloud of thick smoke. Under cover of this protecting curtain one of the four steamers was to rush forward at full speed and smash into the *Merrimac* amidships; any one of them would have cut her in two. A week after our arrival the *Merrimac* came out and stood three miles away, where she had room to manœuver and plenty of water, which she needed, as she drew twenty-three feet, silently challenging our whole

fleet. It was plain that her commander, Commodore Tattnall, was no coward; neither was he a fool, as he would have shown himself had he ventured into the shoal water around Old Point. His impressive defiance was repeated for two hours every day for more than a week, but the anxiously looked-for signal to advance was never hoisted on the *Minnesota*. All of us on the *Illinois* were ambitious to win the honor that would come from sinking the naval star of the Confederacy. The *Vanderbilt* was a faster ship than ours, but we always kept a little in front of the line so we would be first away when the expected signal was broken out. The sides of the *Illinois* were sloshed with oil until they shone like a bottle, and if we had ever hit the *Merrimac* we would have gone clear through her without scratching our paint.

But we watched in vain for the signal that would have given us a chance to make the *Illinois* famous. I do not like to call a dead man a coward, but I will say that Admiral Goldsborough was the most cautious and conservative American I have ever known. There is no doubt that he had orders from Washington not to force a fight with the *Merrimac*, but no man who does not know when and how to disobey orders ought ever to attain flag rank in the United States navy, especially in time of war. But for his slavish obedience to long-range strategists we might have accomplished some-

thing worth while; as it was, we were thoroughly humiliated. Finally, when the Confederates evacuated Norfolk, the *Merrimac* was blown up off Craney Point, early in the morning of May 10, 1862, as her draft made it impossible to take her up the James River to Richmond. To prevent the Federals from raising and repairing her she was literally blown to pieces, the explosion producing a shock which McClellan's army thought was an earthquake. I was on the bridge at the time, and my first impression was that our boilers had let go and torn the bottom out of the *Illinois*. When I saw that we were all right I guessed what had happened and reported to Captain Babcock that the *Merrimac* had been blown up. He was incredulous. "Tut, tut, boy, you're crazy," he said. A few hours later the despatch-boat confirmed my report. With the *Merrimac* menace removed, the *Illinois* returned to New York and retired from the government service, along with her disgusted officers.

It happened, strangely, that in my next berth I found myself lined up on the side for which the *Merrimac* had fought. Very soon after leaving the *Illinois* I went out as mate and sailing-master of the *Deer*, a smart little schooner which sailed from New York for Matamoras, Mexico, with what purported to be a general cargo of merchandise. We made bad weather of it almost from the start and, after having been knocked

around until all on board were worn out, we were obliged to put in at Nassau, leaking badly, for repairs. On our arrival there the captain, an old square-rigger who could not seem to get the hang of handling a schooner, was discharged by one of the owners, who accompanied us, and I was put in command of the ship. It then developed that our cargo consisted chiefly of munitions of war and was intended for the Confederacy. On its delivery at Matamoras, which, being a foreign port, was not blockaded, it was to be immediately taken across the Rio Grande to Brownsville, Texas, and distributed to the Southern armies.

When I was let into this secret I was enthused, rather than in any degree deterred from carrying out the expedition, and threw my whole heart into it. Our repairs were pushed with all possible speed, but before they received the finishing touches the United States consul developed a strong suspicion, which might have been traced to the discharged captain, that we were carrying arms for the Confederacy and warned us not to leave port until he had examined our cargo. The natural result of this order was that we were over the bar and on our way the next morning long before the consul was out of bed. As we were going out we met a Federal cruiser going in; but that gave us no anxiety, for we knew we would be out of sight long before her commander reached an

anchorage and communicated with the consul. We were also aware that our precipitate departure amounted to an admission that the consul's suspicions were correct and that efforts would be made to head us off, for there had been no effort to conceal the fact that we were bound for Matamoras; but, for me, that only added a new and unusual flavor of interest to the voyage, though the owner was somewhat disturbed. If we were captured it might mean the end of a yard-arm for both of us, but I had no fear of that, for the little ship was a credit to her christening. She was a light-draft centerboard vessel and sailed like a witch. We kept a sharp lookout fore and aft, day and night, but saw nothing that looked unfriendly. Still, the possibility of pursuit gave us a pleasurable thrill of excitement all of the way across the Gulf. It was then that the germs of the filibustering fever got into my blood, and they grew and multiplied.

We reached Matamoras without incident and turned our cargo over to the waiting agents of the Confederacy, who paid handsomely for it. Knowing the *Deer* would be seized if she returned to an American port, the owner sold her, paid off all hands, and gave me one hundred dollars to pay my passage back to New York. Instead of taking a smoky steamer I returned on the *Pride of the Wave*, a little thirteen-ton sloop, which made the trip in thirty-two days. On the day we left Bagdad, the port of Matamoras, a

French expedition took forcible possession of a lot of lighters used for transporting heavy cargo over the bar, with which to land a shipment of arms for Maximilian, then Emperor of Mexico.

On my return to New York the owners of the *Deer* bought a coasting-schooner for me and I followed the palling pursuit of routine commercial navigation for three or four years. Wearying of that, I became an apprentice in the Hell Gate Pilots Association. It was Hell Gate, too, then, for that was before Pot Rock had been blown away with dynamite and other especially dangerous obstructions removed. There was no towing in those days, and most of the ships that went through the Gate were wind-jammers, which meant that with a current running nine knots an hour it required some skill to avoid accidents, particularly with an unfavorable wind. I had known the channel from boyhood and was so familiar with its twists and turns and all of its currents that I could take any ship through it in any wind that blew, or with no wind at all, for when one knew the way it was simply a matter of drifting from one current into another and letting them carry the vessel along. After serving my unnecessary but compulsory apprenticeship I worked for two years under a provisional license. This entitled me to pilot ships drawing up to eight feet of water, but I stole many more that drew twice as much. Pilotage fees were based on draft, but aside from

that I preferred the big fellows. When a full-fledged pilot caught me on a ship that drew more than eight feet, he chased me away; but I usually picked up another one just as large. I had a clean record, and received my full license as a Hell Gate pilot on July 25, 1871.

My long acquaintance with the channel and a recklessness that was much more apparent than real gained me the sobriquet of "Daredevil Johnny," and I was known by that name for years. If I was a daredevil I was a cautious one, for I never so much as scratched a ship. It occasionally happened that when a bunch of ships were going up together on the last of the flood-tide in a fluky breeze and I was fighting for the lead, I would knock the seaweed off some of the rocks; but I always knew just how much weed there was at that particular spot, and there was always room for a sheet of paper, at least, between my ship and the rock—they never came together. The captains of many of the ships that went up through Hell Gate kept the pilot aboard until they had cleared Long Island Sound, so our operations often extended to Montauk Point and even farther. For a time I was regularly employed by Clark & Seaman, two pleasant old Quakers who operated the steamships *George Washington* and *General Cromwell* between New York and Halifax. I would go up to Halifax on one ship and return with the other. Not long after I left their service both ships were lost,

with all hands, off Cape Race, the second disaster following the first within two weeks. Lord & Austin, who had been clerks for Clark & Seaman, then put the *City of Mexico* on the same run, and I was on her for a while as pilot. Subsequently I got in trouble with the same ship while running a filibustering expedition to Colombia.

There were times when piloting ships through Hell Gate and the Sound was exciting enough to suit any ordinary person, and I had a number of experiences which were spoken of as "close shaves." One of these concerned the bark *Mohawk*, owned by McKay & Dix, which I was engaged to pilot through the Sound. She carried a crew of Japanese sailors and was loaded with case-oil for Calcutta. We went out on a bitter cold day in midwinter; the sails were frozen to the yards and snow was piled up on deck. It was blowing hard from the northwest and, on account of the heavy weather, a tug towed us through Hell Gate and up to Execution Light, off New Rochelle. The Japs were so long in making sail that all of them had their hands, feet, or ears frozen, and one of them became so benumbed that he fell from the foreyard to the deck, sustaining injuries from which he died in a few hours. When we finally got under way I headed up for New Haven to land our crippled crew and ship a new one. The storm blew itself out during the night, but in the morning it was snowing heavily and breezing up from the north-

east. By the time we let go our anchor in six fathoms of water it was blowing a living gale and kicking up a tremendous sea. I knew we were off New Haven and close inshore, but the snow was so thick one couldn't see a hundred yards. In some way that I never quite understood we got our canvas in, and I rowed—and was blown—ashore in my Hell Gate pilot-boat—a clinker-built craft fourteen feet long and a great sea-boat—and telegraphed the owners of the ship. They sent up a new crew; and after the sea had subsided a bit I got a tug to take out the new men and bring in the suffering Japs, who were placed in a hospital and given every attention their condition required.

While we were dragging our anchor, waiting for the new crew, three ships went by on their way out to sea. Palmer, the pilot on one of them, took to his boat in the shelter of Black Point Bay and managed to reach the shore, but the two other pilots were carried across the Atlantic, as it was considered impossible for them to land. One of them, named Gibbon, tried to make Block Island in his pilot-boat, but lost an oar and was helpless. The ship wore around, and, by a lucky accident, picked him up; but, in the sea that was running, the rescue was not seen from the lighthouse on the island. The light-keepers thought I was Gibbon, as they said I was the only pilot who was foolhardy enough to launch his little boat in such

weather; and they reported that I had been drowned.

When we got the *Mohawk* to going again with the fresh crew, we fetched Montauk Point and stood out to sea, with me still on board, but with no intention of staying there. Had it not been for the gale I would have left the ship inside of the Point, but the captain was nervous, and I wanted to see him well clear of the land. There had been plenty of wind in the Sound, but outside, where it had a clear sweep, it was blowing great guns, and no mistake. The captain insisted on taking me to India with him, but I assured him that the United States was good enough for me and I would stay here. By the time the ship had a good offing we were too far out for me to attempt to reach Block Island, and I was on the point of taking to my boat and letting the gale blow me back to Montauk Point when I saw a schooner, which proved to be the *Hasbrouck*, standing down the coast. From the fact that she was flying light I suspected that she was bound for some coal-port. I told the captain I was going aboard of her. Vehemently protesting that I was crazy and that no boat could live two minutes in the sea that was piling up around us, he changed his course a little so as to bring us closer together when the schooner passed under our stern. I got safely away from the lee of the *Mohawk* and, with the aid of a deftly thrown line from the

flying schooner, was soon on board of her, along with my little boat, with whose seaworthy qualities I was much better acquainted than was the skipper of the bark.

"Where are you bound for?" asked the captain of the *Hasbrouck*, as I climbed over the rail.

"Anywhere in the world but Calcutta," I told him.

The schooner was bound for Richmond, Virginia, for coal, but the storm continued to rage so furiously that she ran for shelter behind the Delaware Breakwater, where I and my boat took the first ship for New York. When I appeared at pilot headquarters, I was hailed as one returned from the grave, and, for the first time, I had the pleasure of reading my own obituary, which had been published several days before.

II

A VENTURE IN TWO REVOLUTIONS

IT was in connection with the Colombian revolution of 1885, the chief feature of which was the burning of the city of Colon by Pedro Prestan, that I became a full-fledged filibuster. Dr. Rafael Nuñez was president of Colombia, and things were going badly with him. What amounted to a state of civil war existed in five districts, including Panama, and the president's enemies were very active. In the fall of 1884, in a message to Congress, he bemoaned the fact that, as he phrased it: "The very foundations of our country are undermined. Revolutions are become a safe and lucrative profession." In the following January the rebels took possession of the lower Magdalena River, Colombia's only waterway worth a name, over which traffic to and from Bogota, the capital, was and still is handled, and occupied the ports of Barranquilla, Savanilla, and Colon, on the Caribbean coast, and Buenaventura and Panama on the Pacific side.

About that time the *City of Mexico* was secretly chartered from Lord & Austin, by the New

York agents for the insurgents, to carry a cargo of arms and ammunition to Savanilla. The *Mexico* had been unable to compete with an English line running from New York to Halifax, and was laid up alongside of the dry-dock at Erie Basin in Brooklyn. I was asked to take command of the expedition, and gladly accepted the commission. As a part of the contract I was required to get the cargo on board, which gave me my first lesson in dodging the customs officials, whose duty it is to prevent the shipment of munitions of war into the territory of a friendly power, if they are to be used against the existing government. It was suspected that a filibustering expedition was about to be sent away from New York, and the agents for the rebels were so closely watched that any activity on their part would have spoiled the whole plan. Therefore, to minimize the chance of discovery, I proceeded to arrange things along plain and simple lines, which are always the best. Much of my success in my well-chosen profession was due to the fact that I made it a rule to take the shortest practicable route between two points and did things in a natural way, whereas those who were seeking to defeat my ends figured that I would take a roundabout way, to avoid capture, and act unnaturally. They set their traps by that chart, with the result that they never caught anything. The reason why most men fail in their undertakings

is that the first thing they do when they are confronted with a problem which requires some thought is to complicate it, on the theory, evidently, that the solution which suggests itself is too simple, and therefore must be wrong. I always sought to avoid complications; these I left to the detectives, who revel in them.

The crew of the *Mexico* had been discharged when she was laid up, and she was in charge of the mate, a person named John H. McCarthy, who, it developed, was far from an adventurous spirit. After having made all of the arrangements I went down to the ship one evening and sent McCarthy home, telling him to come aboard in the morning, along with the new crew that had been engaged, and that I would act as ship-keeper for the night. Along about ten o'clock, when all was quiet in and around the Basin, a steam-lighter slipped alongside with the cargo. The *Mexico's* side ports were opened, and through them a great lot of field-guns, rifles, and ammunition were taken on board and stored in the 'tween decks, aft of the engine-room. Then the ports and hatches were closed and the lighter steamed softly away before daylight, leaving no apparent trace of her visit. In the morning the crew came aboard, followed by two members of the revolutionary party, whose presence I accounted for with the casual statement that they were going down as passengers. John Morrisey—when this is written the rank-

ing chief engineer of the Ward Line—was our chief engineer, and it was fortunate that he was the opposite type of man from McCarthy. We took on stores at once and headed out in the afternoon, ostensibly for Kingston, Jamaica, for fruit. No one suspected that that was not our real destination or that we carried any cargo. We made good weather of it down through Crooked Island Passage and on past the east end of Cuba and Jamaica. When the mate saw that I did not haul up for Kingston he asked, with surprise, if we were not going to Jamaica.

"We'll stop there on our way back," I told him.

That set them all to guessing. There was a free exchange of ideas, some of which I overheard; but they couldn't figure it out, and none of them seemed disposed to ask any more questions. The next night it blew up half a gale, and we rolled around in the seaway until the cargo got adrift. Morrisey told McCarthy he could hear a lot of stuff knocking about and crashing against the engine-room bulkhead, and the inquisitive mate so reported to me. Boxes of cartridges are heavy things, to say nothing of field-guns, and, fearing that they would smash out the side ports and go overboard, I sent the mate and a gang of men below to secure them. McCarthy came back with his eyes bulging out like young pumpkins.

"The ship is full of arms and ammunition," he declared, with excitement and exaggeration.

"Are you sure?" I asked, with as much surprise as I could counterfeit.

"Positive! There's enough stuff down there to equip an army."

"I noticed them putting some things aboard the night before we sailed," I explained. "Maybe there were some arms in the boxes."

"Well, where are we bound for, anyway?" inquired the perturbed mate, with unconcealed anxiety.

"I'll tell you in a day or two," I replied, and he had to be content with that.

We raised Savanilla light early in the morning. My directions were to get the light to bear east and run for it, but I did not consider it wise to go into a strange port at night with such a cargo, so we stood off until daybreak, with the mystified mate and most of the crew waiting around on deck and wondering what would happen next. As the sun shot up, in the hurried way it has in the tropics, I saw a war-ship lying in the harbor, but a glance at her rig told me she was not an American, which was the only thing we had to fear. Her presence, however, greatly excited our two passengers, and when they saw smoke pouring from her funnels, from the customary pricking of the fires at sunrise, they went off into such a panic that I feared they would jump overboard and try to swim to shore. They thought she was coming out after us, and hysterically begged me to run

away. I told them I would get frightened first, when there was any cause for it, and that they could safely restrain their excitability until they saw me industriously ringing bells.

I made the war-ship out to be a French cruiser, which she was. At daylight we steamed in under her stern, with our two passengers in a condition bordering on hysteria, and anchored four hundred yards inside of her. The customs officers were watching for us; and when they came aboard I saw everything was all right, for they and our passengers, whose heated heroism had returned when we passed the war-ship without being fired on, hugged each other like a lot of school-girls. It then developed that one of the panicky pair was a general, and the anxiety which he professed to plunge into the war was pathetic to those of us who had seen his knees hammering each other half an hour before. The customs authorities made no request for papers, but dispensed with all formalities and ordered lighters alongside to get the arms and ammunition ashore. They worked with such somnolent swiftness that it took them only thirty-six hours to unload the cargo which we had loaded in New York in six hours.

After the last of the guns had been put ashore Morrisey and I accepted an invitation to visit the neighboring city of Barranquilla, where we met General Rafael Aizpuru, the leader of the revolution. At his urgent solicitation I con-

tracted with him to transport five hundred soldiers, as he called them, to Rio Hacha, a fortified coast town one hundred and fifty miles to the eastward, which he was anxious to capture. Though I was new at the filibustering game, I had been looking up the law, and, in consequence of such study as I had given it, I stipulated that the troops would be carried as though they were ordinary passengers and must come aboard without their arms, which were to be shipped separately as freight.

These soldiers were the funniest-looking lot of supposed fighting men I have ever seen; if they could be realistically reproduced on the comic-opera stage their appearance would be regarded as the height of absurdity. They were of all sizes, shapes, and ages, and all imaginable colors save white. No two of them wore the same rig, but their costumes were alike in that all were ridiculously fantastic. They had all sorts of gay feathers stuck in their hats in riotous profusion and from two to twenty cigar-ribbons tied around their arms to give them an imaginary rank. They knew nothing at all about handling the arms we had brought down, and I was amazed that they did not clutter up the deck with dead patriots while they were examining the weapons—out of sheer inquisitiveness, apparently, for the possibility of a battle seemed to be the one thing to which they gave no thought. Many of them were accom-

panied by their wives or sweethearts, and the whole affair was much more suggestive of a picnic than a military expedition. The only commendable feature connected with the whole wonderful exhibition was the agility displayed by the officers in keeping out of the way of their swords, which they mistook for hurdles.

We reached Rio Hacha just before sundown. When we got within sight of the town, all of the warriors and their women were ordered below, and the officers concealed themselves about the deck. The collector of the port, who was also the comandante, came off to meet us in a boat with six men. As he swung alongside some of the officers incautiously stuck their heads over the rail in their hurry to get a look at him. Seeing that something was wrong, he started to push off; but a score of the rebels promptly covered him with their revolvers, and he reluctantly accepted their invitation to come aboard with his men. His crew were stowed away in a cabin, and the comandante was simultaneously prodded with swords and with questions as to the strength of the government force ashore. When the rebel general learned that Rio Hacha was defended by nearly as many men as he had in his command he quickly concluded not to land, in which decision he was earnestly supported by every officer and beribboned private in his party. Wishing to see what kind of a fight they would put up, I urged them to go ashore and attack the town.

I told them I had brought them there to fight, as agreed, and that if they failed to complete the bargain they were cowards. This charge they cheerfully admitted by refusing to deny it.

Moved by my taunts, perhaps, the pack of poltroons then conceived the brilliant scheme of capturing a little schooner lying a mile away, which was flying the Colombian colors and was said to be a government war-ship. The commanding general officially advised me of the plan, and grandly ordered me to run the *Mexico* alongside the schooner. Without mincing words I told him I had run all of the risks I proposed to take with such a craven crowd, and assured him that he would find himself more at home in a climate much hotter than that of Colombia. My refusal to consider his command, and the manner of it, caused much physical-culture conversation and a great display of hardware, to which I replied, somewhat passionately, I fear, with such expressive expletives as I had been able to pick up in my thirty years at sea. The upshot of it all was that when their persuasive powers had failed they removed me from the bridge by main force and awkwardness and placed a Curaçao pilot, who had been sent along on account of his knowledge of the coast, in command of the ship. Thinking it would be plain sailing after that, the rebels gleefully told one another what they would do to the handful of men on the schooner; but they reckoned without Morrisey. Know-

ing that I was no longer in command, the big chief engineer was deaf to all signals. The Curaçao pilot rang bells until the engine-room sounded like a fire station in a panic, but not a lever was touched nor did a wheel turn.

"That Dutchman's got a good arm, but he's liable to break it," was Morrisey's only comment, as he smiled at the clamor.

Finally a guard was sent for the engineer, and he was taken before the general, who imperiously demanded an explanation of his failure to obey signals.

"I will not turn an ounce of steam into the cylinders so long as Captain O'Brien is off the bridge," quietly replied Morrisey, without a trace of nervousness.

"But Captain O'Brien is no longer in command of the ship," explained the general. "He was removed for refusing to obey my orders, and" —with an attempt at gravity which was only amusing—"he may yet pay for his insubordination with his life."

"In that case," was the cold reply, "you had better get a new chief engineer where you got your new captain. I'll take no orders from you nor any of your gang."

This suggestion gave the bold warrior a new idea, and he swallowed his rage long enough to call for a *maquinista*. His subordinates took up the cry and tore around among the rank and file in search of an engineer. If their number had

included a man who understood a marine engine Morrisey and I might have found ourselves in serious trouble; but there was not one among them who knew enough about machinery to oil a lawn-mower. The assistant engineers, who were then appealed to, let themselves out with the explanation, which was accepted as true, that they knew only their own duties and were not competent to take charge of the engine. They said they might make a mistake that would blow up the ship, which naïve suggestion was all that was needed to eliminate them from further consideration.

When this situation developed, Morrisey was again summoned before the general. At first an effort was made to bribe him, but he just laughed. Then the general declared that, if he did not return to the engine-room and obey orders within five minutes, he would have him shot on the spot. Morrisey, like myself, was a man who ordinarily used short words, and only as many as were absolutely necessary; but on that occasion he was, for a few minutes, the most loquacious person I have ever listened to, and about the maddest. He defied all South Americans in general and Colombians in particular, with special reference to those who were aboard the *Mexico*. He served notice on them that he was an American officer on an American ship, and that if they harmed him, or any of us, they would surely suffer for it, whereas if they carried

out their threat and seized the schooner they would be hung for piracy. If I had forgotten anything expressive of derision he remembered it, and I listened with profound admiration while he told them who and what they were, where they came from, and where they belonged. His vitriolic vehemence was a continuous blast of blue fire, under which the cowards shriveled up and scattered. When he could think of nothing more to say, the half-paralyzed general held a brief consultation with his staff, at the conclusion of which I was restored to the command of the ship and Morrisey returned in scornful triumph to his engine-room.

Fearing that the government forces would come out in the darkness and board us in an attempt to rescue their comandante, and knowing that if such an attack was made there would be a heavy loss of life among the rebels who jumped overboard, I put to sea at once and returned to Savanilla. I supposed that our motley mob would be considered in disgrace; but, instead, they were welcomed as heroes, because, forsooth, they had effected the capture of the comandante at Rio Hacha and his boat's crew.

When the revolutionary treasurer settled with me for transporting the troops, I was paid in the depreciated paper currency of the country. There was a pile of it that suggested nothing so much as a stack of hay, and the silver for

which I exchanged it was a burden for two able seamen. In addition to this payment, and as a reward for the service I had rendered them, the rebels refunded the port charges, which amounted to several hundred dollars. This money I credited to the owners of the ship. The officers expected that, as it amounted to a gratuity, it would be divided among them; and when they found they were to get none of it there were many protests. McCarthy was the chief complainant. He contended that the money was a gift to the officers and that, as the owners knew nothing about it, we should divide it among ourselves. I insisted that the fact that the owners had no knowledge of the donation was all the more reason why I should be honest with them, and refused to listen to any argument on the subject, whereat McCarthy showed much annoyance.

Soon after our return to Savanilla it was announced that the captured comandante was to be shot, and a regular field day of murder was planned by the rebels. When I heard of this I called on General Aizpuru and told him that the United States government would hold him personally responsible for the safety of the comandante and his men, and that if any of them were injured he would pay dearly for the outrage. After much argument Aizpuru assured me that none of the prisoners would be harmed, and they were not, though they were

kept in confinement until the revolt was suppressed, several months later.

We then went to Boca del Toro, at the west end of Colombia, and loaded up with cocoanuts and bananas and returned to New York. The disgruntled mate hustled ashore with the ship's log-book, which he had no right to take away from the vessel, and turned it over to Elihu Root, then the United States District Attorney, to whom he told all he knew about the expedition, and a lot that he didn't know. Two days later I was indicted on a charge of filibustering, or, in the exact language of the law, "aiding and abetting rebels in a country at peace with the United States." I was arrested and taken before Mr. Root, but declined to be drawn into conversation with him.

When my trial came up before Judge Brown, I was defended by Wallace MacFarlane, who had married a daughter of F. J. Lord, one of the owners of the *Mexico*, and therefore had something of a personal interest in the case. My defense was that I had carried peaceful passengers, not soldiers—which, in view of their cowardice, was the fact—and I was acquitted without much trouble. Even McCarthy admitted that the troops carried no arms when they came aboard or when they left the ship. Judge Brown held that "if passengers did not carry arms when they went on board or ashore they did not constitute an armed military ex-

pedition within the meaning of the law." This doctrine, which has since been upheld by the higher courts, was in line with my own theory, and I was greatly pleased to hear it laid down as the law, for I expected to profit by it in future operations.

After my dismissal Mr. Root said I was the "dumbest witness he had ever seen on the stand." No doubt he spoke truly, for, while I answered every question that was put to me, I volunteered no explanations; it was no part of my business to tell all I knew if the prosecuting attorney could not drag it out of me with his interrogations. My acquittal was followed by the release of the *Mexico*, which had been seized by the Federal authorities when I was indicted. She was chartered to carry fruit from Cuba to New York, but it seemed that she could not be operated profitably without violating the law, and after a few trips she was again laid up in Erie Basin, to await further filibustering activity.

In 1887, Marco Aurelio Soto, ex-president of Honduras, who was living in handsome style on Fifth Avenue near Sixty-third Street, secretly started a movement to regain the presidency by the always popular means of a revolution. Like all former rulers of South and Central American countries, he was possessed of a large "war chest," so there was no lack of funds. After assuring himself of some support and sending word to his friends to prepare for trouble,

he bought the *City of Mexico* from Lord & Austin, through his agent, A. D. Straus, of 15 Broadway, with the intention of using her to carry the weapons with which he expected to wage his little war. On account of the notoriety which I had unwillingly acquired in the Colombian affair, a new captain, who could never have been suspected of cherishing filibustering inclinations, was placed in command of the ship; but I was engaged at the same time and held in reserve. The first thing the new captain did was to get caught as he was trying to take on a cargo of arms and ammunition from a lighter in Erie Basin as I had done two years before. His detection confirmed the suspicion that steps were being taken toward a disturbance of the peace in Honduras, and the vigilance of the customs officers was increased.

The *Mexico*, apparently reformed and returned to inoffensive navigation, then shipped a general cargo for Progreso, Mexico, and the arms were openly sent to Kingston, Jamaica, on an Atlas liner. It was intended that after the *Mexico* had delivered her cargo she would go to Jamaica and get the arms and take them to Honduras; but this plan was arranged in ignorance of the English law. Any one can ship all of the arms he wants to into British territory, but no one can get them out again unless it is clear that they are going to some recognized government. Consequently, when the *Mexico* called at King-

ston for the arms, she found them under guard. After some delay they were shipped back to New York on a regular liner as the only way out of the muddle.

Customs officers and detectives employed by the government of Honduras were watching for them on their arrival, with instructions never to let them get out of their sight. The arms and ammunition were piled up on the dock and then transferred to a steam-lighter of the Shortland Company, which had orders to take them to the Erie Basin, where they were to be locked up in a warehouse and placed under a permanent guard. The men who were handling the heavy cargo were so intentionally slow in getting it aboard the lighter that it was late in the evening before the work was finished. The detectives and customs men, more anxious to get home than to earn their pay, asked the captain of the lighter when he would go over to Erie Basin. He told them he would not move until morning, and, with the promise that he would find them waiting for him at the warehouse, they all went away. There were enough of them so that they could have afforded to leave a couple of men on guard, as a wise precaution, but it did not occur to them that they might be overlooking something.

In the mean time, the *Fram*, a Norwegian fruit steamer which was laid up at Boston, had been chartered by Lord & Austin, at the instance of Marco Aurelio, and I had been called on to take

an active hand in the affair. After arrangements had been made as to the precise manner in which the revolutionary cargo was to be handled on its arrival from Jamaica, I went up to Boston to take command of the *Fram* and bring her down. We reached New York, not by accident, on the very day the lighter took the much-traveled munitions of war aboard, and went to an out-of-the-way place in Weehawken to coal. We filled all of our bunkers and put three hundred tons in the hold, for we were going on a long trip and could not afford to stop anywhere for coal.

Late in the afternoon we dropped down the Hudson and anchored off the Statue of Liberty, in the lee of a big iron sailing-ship which had sunk across the channel and made a good breakwater, for it was in the winter and much ice was floating down the river. About nine o'clock in the evening the lighter which the sleuths had deserted came alongside, and her whole cargo of field-guns, rifles, and ammunition was taken aboard through our side ports. It was a very simple operation and free from interference of any kind. The officers did not suppose we would have the effrontery to take the stuff away from under their noses, and so the scheme we worked was not guarded against. The empty lighter steamed thirty miles up the Hudson, where she remained in hiding for two or three weeks, and we were well out to sea before daylight.

When the *Fram's* supplementary clearance was filed at the Custom-House five days later, which was the limit of time the law allowed, it revealed our cargo and destination, but it was then too late to head us off; fortunately there was no wireless telegraph in those days. We stopped at Turk's Island to pick up a gang of filibusters who had been engaged in New York and sent there on a Clyde liner. Many of them backed out at the last minute, but we took on board fifty as tough characters as one could wish to see. They had all been promised plantations if the revolution succeeded, and were ready for any kind of a fight. Of a higher type were three Cuban generals, veterans of the Ten Years' War, who had grown so accustomed to fighting that they could do nothing else. They had been engaged by Marco Aurelio to command divisions of his army. Though we did not land them, they subsequently reached Honduras from Halifax by way of the West Indies, and two of them were killed there. Gen. Antonio Maceo, the third one, escaped and lived long enough to do more hard fighting than any other commander in Cuba's final revolt against Spain, in which he was killed shortly before it succeeded.

From Turk's Island we sailed for Great Corn Island, at the westerly end of the Caribbean Sea. It had been arranged that we would meet the *Mexico* there or at Bluefields, Nicaragua, and put our cargo aboard of her. I was then to take

command of the *Mexico*, sending her captain home in the *Fram*, and land the arms at the appointed place in Honduras. Our course carried us close to St. Andrew's Island, a Colombian blot on the face of the waters east of Great Corn Island; and as we passed it I saw an American war-ship in the harbor with a steamer, which I could not make out, under her lee.

It later developed that this half-hidden vessel was the *Mexico*, which had been seized by the war-ship for filibustering. For some unaccountable reason the captain of the *Mexico* had put in there while waiting for us, instead of obeying orders and sticking close to the meeting-point. His crew went ashore and, under the influence of the native rum, boasted that they were waiting for a ship-load of arms with which the government of Honduras was to be upset. Hearing this interesting bit of gossip, Brooks Carnes, the American consular agent on the island, sent to Colon for a war-ship which he knew was lying there. She came tearing over at full speed, and the carefully planned expedition went by the board when she took charge of the *Mexico*, including her foolish captain and his crew, who were so enamored with the music of their own tongues. When they saw us go by it was suspected that we were the other part of the conspiracy, but we were not followed, as the captain of the war-ship had arranged to start for Key West the next day, with the *Mexico* in convoy, and he did not

wish to go to the trouble of changing his plans. Furthermore, as I have observed, naval officers have considerable sympathy for filibusters, as a general proposition, and seldom go beyond the strict letter of their orders in seeking to apprehend them.

There was no sign of the *Mexico* at either Great Corn Island or Bluefields, but the captain of an American schooner, which we met coming up the coast, volunteered the information that he had seen her the week before at St. Andrew's Island. With a good idea as to what had happened, but to make sure and take no chance of missing the other ship if she had avoided capture, I returned to St. Andrew. We approached it carefully late in the afternoon so that if we were observed and pursued by some watching war-ship we could escape in the darkness. The coast was clear, so we went on in and anchored just outside of the harbor. The energetic Mr. Carnes came off to meet us, and urged me so insistently to come into the harbor and anchor close to shore that he aroused my suspicions. He gave me to understand that the *Mexico* had been there, but would tell me nothing about her.

I went ashore to investigate, and soon had the whole story from a stranded American skipper who had lost his ship. From this it appeared that, not content with having brought about the seizure of the *Mexico*, Mr. Carnes had turned in a general alarm. In response to a message

which he sent to Key West, several American war-ships had been sent out to search for the *Fram* along the coast of Honduras, and a Spanish gunboat was also looking for us, in an effort to capture the Cuban officers we had on board, who were wanted for their part in the Ten Years' War. Their capture would, of course, have been followed by their summary execution, and, as they might have been unnecessarily alarmed, I did not let them know that their old enemies were on their trail. I also learned, with even more interest, that if Carnes had persuaded me to enter the harbor he intended to chain the *Fram's* propeller during the night and hold us there until some war-ship came along to take us into custody. This explained his pressing invitation to make myself at home in his establishment.

At the secret instance of Carnes I was taken before a native judge on suspicion of being a filibuster. I told the judge I had a cargo of coal and was looking for a market. Before this story could be inquired into word came from the governor, who lived some miles away, to have me put off the island at once; the drunken crew of the *Mexico* had disturbed the tropical torpor of the place to such an extent that he wanted no more Americans around. His order, which abruptly terminated the proceedings before the funny black judge, suited me exactly, and I complied with it at once.

Mr. Carnes got word in advance of the governor's action and promptly took to the bush. I could not take time to follow him, but I left word at his office that the next time we met I would kill him for lying to me and trying to trap me under the guise of a courtesy. When this promise was made, I fully intended to keep it; but the next time I saw Carnes he was so nearly dead that I let him go, never suspecting that he would recover and become a spy at my heels in the Cuban revolution.

My orders were, if anything happened to the *Mexico*, to go to Kingston and turn the cargo over to the agents for the Atlas Line, and this I proceeded to do. Two hours after we reached Jamaica an English war-ship came in and, plainly under orders, anchored close alongside of us. On account of their previous experience with our unlucky cargo the Atlas Line agents refused to have anything to do with it, but I finally found an Englishman who allowed me to store it in his warehouse. I thought they would let us go then, but, instead, the governor sent a file of soldiers aboard the *Fram*. They disconnected our machinery and kept us prisoners for a week. We would have been held there much longer, and might have been turned over to the Honduran government to furnish targets for some of their bad marksmen, but for a desperate bluff which I ran on the captain of the port. I told him we had violated no law by bringing arms

into Jamaica, and that we had proved our peaceful purpose by turning them over to an Englishman immediately on our arrival. He might guard the arms, if he wished, with propriety, but it was decidedly improper for him to hold a ship flying a friendly flag merely on the strength of silly gossip and in the absence of a formal complaint of any kind. Therefore I indignantly demanded the release of the ship, failing which I assured him he might expect a protest from the Norwegian government that would involve him in serious trouble. The earnestness of my argument, and my apparent anxiety to keep him out of a bad mess, impressed him, and he ordered the soldiers ashore until he could consult with the governor. The following night was very dark, and no one saw us as we stole out of the harbor without showing any kind of a light.

When we reached New York I was met at the dock by a messenger from Lord & Austin, who advised me to disappear at once if I wished to avoid arrest. I took the first train for Boston, and in a couple of days word was sent to me to go to Halifax, N. S. In the hotel there at which I had been directed to stop I met two of the *Mexico's* officers, who had been arrested for filibustering, soon after I left, and had jumped their bail. In a few days I received orders to move on to Sydney, Nova Scotia's jumping-off place, as the officers were still on my trail. Three weeks later a telegram told me it was safe to come

home, and I returned to New York on the *Miranda*. I found that the *Mexico* had been condemned as a filibuster and sold, and the government was willing to let it go at that. However, when the captain of the *Fram* returned to Norway, his license was taken away from him for his part in the affair; the Norwegians are more strict about such matters than we are.

With the petering-out of the revolution General Soto took up his residence in Paris, where he died not long afterward, possibly from disappointment, while I found something still more exciting to which I turned my willing hands.

III

"DYNAMITE JOHNNY"

NOT long after the failure of Marco Aurelio Soto's revolt in Honduras I engaged in the undertaking that gave me the sobriquet by which I have ever since been known. A Cuban, supposedly wealthy and also suspected by some generally wise but always nervous people of being an able worker in some new revolutionary plot, who had a coal concession on the Isthmus of Panama, then a part of Colombia, came to New York with an order for sixty tons of dynamite. In those days dynamite was not such a common commodity as it is now, and it was held in sincere respect both afloat and ashore, for the process of its manufacture had not reached the point where it could be knocked around and otherwise insulted without running more risks than most men cared to take. Sixty tons of it sounded like enough to blow the whole of Colombia off the map with one explosion. Even if a ship-owner could have been found who was willing to carry such a large quantity of it, he would have demanded a prohibitive price, so the careful Cuban bought the *Rambler*, the largest schooner in the

New York Yacht Club and owned by Commodore Thomas. The waist of the handsome craft was ruthlessly torn out to make a storage place for the dynamite. The explosive was in sticks, an inch or more in diameter and a foot long, and was packed in sawdust in fifty-pound boxes.

When the *Rambler* was ready to receive her cargo her new owner went in search of a captain; but he could find no one who wanted the job or who could be induced to take it, even though he offered double the ordinary pay and a large bonus—which latter was to be paid on the delivery of the dynamite. I was then back at my old occupation of piloting ships through Hell Gate, but the Cuban heard of me in some way and came after me. It did not require much persuasion to induce me to take command of the expedition. There was quite enough danger about it to make it attractive, and, being of Irish parentage, I was favorably disposed toward dynamite on general principles. The size of the shipment was not appalling, for, except as to the number of fragments of disintegrated humanity which would suddenly be scattered over the broad sea in the event of an explosion, I could see no difference between sixty tons and only six; the ship, though old, was still a stanch craft, and I felt sure that if I kept my mind on navigation rather than on her cargo we would find our lives in our vest pockets and undamaged

when we reached Colon. So I cheerfully signed the papers.

The cargo was taken aboard while the schooner was lying at anchor off the Statue of Liberty. When it came to shipping a crew, I was forced to do some lying, which I regretted, but there seemed to be no other way out of it. If I had let the truth be known I couldn't have secured a crew on any terms, so I told the men that the *Rambler* was a private yacht going down to Colon to meet her owner, and that the improvised hold, in which the dynamite was stored, was filled with stores, as it was intended to start out at once on a long cruise. In a sense this was at least partly true, for the Cuban coal-dealer returned to Colon by steamer. He earnestly explained that this was not due to anything of fear as to the safety of the schooner, but because he wished to get there ahead of us to make some arrangements. My optimistic friends insisted on bidding me farewell, for they assured me I would never see them again, but that worried me not at all. We left New York early in the summer of 1888, and had good weather all of the way down the coast; but in the Gulf of Mexico we ran into as severe a tropical storm as I have ever seen. For two days we had a howling northeaster, which kicked up a savage sea, but we ran before it under shortened sail, and I felt no great anxiety.

At sunset on the second day the wind fell

away to a dead calm, and in half an hour we were in the center of a terrific electrical storm, while the rain fell in solid sheets. There was nothing to do but take in every stitch of canvas, to prevent the ship from threshing it and herself to pieces, and let her wallow in it. Never have I seen such a brilliant display of electricity, nor one that lasted so long. From sundown to sunrise the sky was literally ablaze with dazzling streaks of fire; it was a marvelous exhibition of the heavens in a fury. To the innocent mates and crew it was awe-inspiring—it was strange to see a ship's company silent in the face of frenzied elements instead of cursing them—but to me it came close to being terrifying. The falling rain picked up the electricity and carried it down until the air we breathed was filled with it. When I ran my hand through my hair it snapped and crackled like a hickory fire, and every time I touched a piece of metal I felt a slight shock. There seemed to be enough of the mysterious current running through the ship to set her on fire, and when, now and then, the rain ceased for a moment and one of the men struck a match in a futile effort to light his pipe, I imagined the expected blaze had started.

Though it was doubtful if our small boats could have lived long in the sea that was running, I would have been tempted to abandon the ship but for my disinclination to frighten the crew. It was of them I thought rather than

myself, for I was not pleased with the possibility of causing the annihilation of men whom I had signed on under false pretenses, even though I met death with them. The lightning fairly played around our mastheads, and I knew if it struck us it would run down into the hold and set off the dynamite, and we would be blown to the four winds with never a chance for our lives. The long arms of fire flashed down at us viciously, as though anxious to destroy us; they came at us as if they were aimed by old Jupiter himself with wholesale murder in his heart. Perhaps we were not struck because we were on our beam-ends more often than on an even keel. We rolled and pitched around so that I expected to see the masts go by the board at any minute; and I almost hoped they would, for it would have greatly lessened the danger.

Next to the fiery fusilade the thing which gave me the most concern was the possibility that some of the boxes would get adrift and the dynamite be exploded either by concussion or friction. We had been under a blazing sun for more than a week, and I knew that in very warm weather nitroglycerin melts and runs together in the composition with which it is mixed into sticks, in which condition it is liable to be exploded by a slight jar. I had personally directed the stowing of the cargo, and it was well done, but it appeared that nothing could long remain secure in such a buffeting as we were

getting. My anxiety on this point became so keen that along toward the middle of the night I went down into the hold to investigate. I could not send any of the crew, for "DYNAMITE" was stamped in large letters on every box, and at sight of that all of them would have been over the side as quickly as they could lower a boat. I did not wish to see them go to almost certain death in the raging sea, nor was I anxious to be left to navigate the ship alone.

It turned out that I was none too soon with my inquiry, for some of the boxes were just beginning to work loose and rub against each other. It was no easy task to secure them, single-handed and with the ship constantly trying to turn turtle, but with the aid of fenders and strips of canvas I finally made everything fast again, so that I had no further uneasiness on that score. That was, I think, as ticklish a position as I have ever been in—with boxes of dynamite under and around me and the ship's timbers screaming and groaning like ten thousand devils just out of hell; crashing thunder, blazing lightning, and a deluge of water above, and outside a mighty sea that was tossing the vessel around like a washtub. It was not a situation in which one was in any danger of falling asleep.

With the coming of the sun the lightning, thunder, and rain ceased as suddenly as they had opened hostilities; the sky cleared until soon

there was not a cloud in sight and the trade-wind breezed up over our quarter. That is a way the enlivening elements have in the tropics. We reached Colon in twelve and a half days from New York, including the night we were hove to in the storm, and another one when we went to the other extreme and were becalmed, which was tramp-steamship time.

When the crew saw the hundreds of boxes of dynamite coming out of the hold, some of them probably would have tried to murder me if they had not found themselves suffering considerably from heart failure. Their evident terror, when there was no further cause for alarm, was calculated to provoke mirth; but I did not laugh much, for my conscience was troubling me, and I was not at all comfortable under the reproachful and accusing glances that were being leveled at me. For the first time in my life I had deliberately lied, and the realization of that fact produced a new and decidedly unpleasant sensation. If we had been blown up I would have been as much responsible for the death of every man on the ship as though I had murdered them. I offered no explanations or apologies, but, as I watched our deadly cargo going ashore, I determined that there would be no more entries of that kind on my log-book. I was born with hatred for a liar, and never since then have I told an untruth that could possibly hurt any one. When it has been a case of tell-

ing damaging truths or lying viciously, I have kept my lips closed; what you don't say can't come back to accuse you.

With our cargo discharged, the *Rambler* carried a few cargoes of ice from Jamaica to the Isthmus, apparently to give her a reputation for respectability, and was then ordered to Boca del Toro, two hundred miles west of Colon, where I turned her over to a ship-keeper. Not long afterward she went into the smuggling business, in which trade I had refused to accompany her, and after a short career she was seized by the Colombian government and blown up, off the Pacific Mail dock at Boca del Toro, as the surest means of ending her activity in that direction.

While I was waiting at Boca del Toro for a ship to take me back to Colon, I was greatly surprised to meet my old friend Brooks Carnes, the American consular agent who had tried to cause my capture at St. Andrew's Island a year before, when I was attempting to deliver a cargo of arms to the revolutionists in Honduras, and whom I had promised to kill the next time I saw him. He had been promoted in the mean time and made consul at Colon, probably as a reward for his activity in capturing the *Mexico* and his earnest effort to trap me. When I saw him he had been out in the mountains with a surveying party of some kind. The trip must have been a hard one, for he was a physical wreck when he came into town. He ran right

into me on the street before he recognized me. Then he began to beg for his life, and he was such a picture of misery that I let him go. He looked as though he could not live a week, but he recovered.

Subsequently he became a spy for the Spanish government, and eight years later, when I was smuggling arms into Cuba, he brazenly wrote me a letter requesting me to meet him. Between the lines it was plainly a proposal to bribe me to betray my friends, so I ignored it, as I did several other communications of a similar character, one of which, involving a specific offer of a small fortune, came from an accredited diplomatic representative of Spain. Some months after the receipt of this letter from Carnes he died in Jacksonville, where he was one of a number of spies who were trying to keep track of my movements. There were plenty of Cuban enthusiasts who would have considered it both a duty and an honor to kill him if they had known of his proposal to me; but they did not know, and he died from natural causes, which, after all, was the better way.

On my return to Colon I caught the Chagres fever and nearly died from it before I could get back to New York. When I reappeared at the headquarters of the pilots and along the waterfront, my old friends began to hail me as "Dynamite Johnny," and the name stuck; it did not come, as has often been stated, from carrying

dynamite to the Cubans, years later. After I had fully recovered from the fever I rejoined the Hell Gate pilots and followed my old calling until the spring of 1889, when I took command of the steamship *Caroline Miller* and began carrying arms to Haiti, where General Florville Hippolyte used them with good effect against his old enemy, General F. D. Legitime. Hippolyte and Legitime had been plotting for the presidency throughout the latter years of General Salomon's term in the executive "mansion," and had divided the country into two rival camps. They rose in revolt about the same time, and in December, 1888, at Port au Prince, Legitime had himself elected president by the Departments of the South and West. Hippolyte, who was supported by the Departments of the North and Northwest, promptly organized a provisional government at Cape Haitien, and the two rivals settled down to fight it out.

Hippolyte shrewdly secured the "moral support" of the United States government by promising that when he became undisputed president he would cede to it a coaling-station at Môle Saint Nicholas, made famous during the Spanish-American War as the place off which heavy firing was heard every day, according to the abnormally attuned ears of the very capable correspondents for the New York newspapers. This country's active sympathy with Hippolyte made it such a simple matter to get

away with our cargoes that there was no attempt at secrecy in our clearances. For the same reason the expeditions were not attended by any great amount of danger, but the absence of excitement was in some degree compensated for by my interest in observing the manner in which the Washington government exerted its friendly influence. It was a novel experience to feel that I had the American navy at my back instead of at my throat, as it had always been before and was again a few years later.

The *Caroline Miller* was owned by the McCaldin Brothers, of New York, and was no new hand at carrying munitions of war to Haiti. For six months before I took command of her she had been under charter to Jiminez Husted, the Haitien consul at New York, who was a member of the Hippolyte faction, and had been carrying arms to that party. Husted wished to renew the charter; but the McCaldins concluded they could make more money by running her themselves, so they turned her over to me. Frank Elliott, a ship-broker on South Street, was the agent for our cargoes, which, to avoid open conflict with the customs regulations, were consigned to Theodore Kayner, at Port de Paix; to a German named Gustavus at Cape Haitien; to an American of the name of Orr at Gonaives; and to another American at Saint Marc, all of whom were agents for the provisional government.

Though the *Miller* registered only nine hun-

dred tons net, we carried twelve hundred tons on our first trip. Our scuppers were awash when we left New York, early in the summer of 1889, and the Plimsoll mark was on our smoke-stack. We were so heavily overloaded that it was out of the question to insure either ship or cargo, but that caused no concern. Among the supplies on board were ten thousand rifles, tons of ammunition, and a great lot of stores, fresh beef, and ice. We stopped at Great Inagua Island to pick up a crew of natives to handle the cargo, as I feared the Haitiens were so filled with the martial spirit that they would refuse to do any ordinary work.

Twenty-five miles off Cape Haitien we found Commodore Bancroft Gherardi, of the United States navy, waiting for us on his flag-ship, the famous old *Kearsarge*. He had been sent to Haitien waters to give Hippolyte his "moral support," and, having been advised of our coming, had put out to watch for us and convoy us into port. His instructions were not to fire a shot in our defense; but in the event that we were attacked by one of Legitime's gunboats he was expected to put himself between us, so that a shot fired at the *Miller* would have to pass through the *Kearsarge* before it reached my ship. Legitime understood the situation, and the commanders of his war-ships had been warned that in firing on the *Miller* they must be careful not to hit the *Kearsarge*, which latter eventuality

would promptly have been regarded as an act of war against the United States. This sort of international courtesy was a new thing to me, and I am bound to say it did not provoke any great amount of admiration for the diplomacy of James G. Blaine. If the administration at Washington wished to ally itself with Hippolyte, it should have done so openly instead of covertly, it seemed to me.

But I knew my game, and was there to play it without assuming any diplomatic responsibilities. We stopped close alongside the *Kearsarge*, and after sending a lot of ice and fresh meat to the war-ship, I called on Commodore Gherardi to pay my respects and get the lay of the land. After he had confirmed my understanding of his purpose in those waters it was arranged that in going from port to port he would keep a short distance ahead of the *Miller*, and we would steam at only three-quarter speed so that in case we were attacked we could crowd on full steam and get under the lee of the *Kearsarge* with little loss of time. The clever old commodore, though possessing all of the dignity called for by his rank, was not so serious-minded that it worried him any, and the humor of the situation appealed to him as strongly as it did to me.

"It's funny," he said, "that after doing its durnedest to capture you when you were trying to help out the rebellious Honduranians, the American navy should now be giving you its

earnest support in violating the same law against filibustering. But, if we've got to aid some trangressor of the strict letter of international law, I'm glad it's a man who has had experience and knows how to do it."

This frank expression of sympathy did much to establish cordial relations, and, with the conditions of our conspiracy well understood, the *Kearsarge* led the way into Cape Haitien. The arms which were to be left there were quietly unloaded at night, to escape the vigilance of Legitime's spies, and in exchange for them we took on a lot of coffee. We also shipped eight hundred soldiers for the next stop, which was Port de Paix. We arrived there without incident, and unloaded the troops and more arms, and took on another consignment of coffee and five hundred new soldiers for Gonaives.

We left Port de Paix in the evening, and late in the night, off the famed and fabled Môle Saint Nicholas, we ran right into two of Legitime's gunboats—the *Dessalines* and an old Mallory liner that had been converted into a war-ship, so called. They were exchanging signals when we made them out. They had seen the *Kearsarge* go by and knew we were not far behind. Our lights were all doused, of course, and we were hugging the shore so closely—most of the time a biscuit could have been tossed ashore from our pilot-house—that I hardly expected they would see us; but, through some streak of

luck, the *Dessalines* picked us up and blazed away at such short range that with decent gunnery the *Miller* might easily have been sent to the bottom.

The first shot, which was the best aimed of the lot, struck the water one hundred and fifty yards ahead of us. Half a dozen more seemed to have been aimed in our general direction, but that was the most that could be said of them. With such crazy marksmanship, however, there is always a chance that a misdirected shot may do serious damage, so with that in mind, rather than through any great fear of being hit or captured, I ordered full speed with the crack of the first gun and set out after the *Kearsarge*, which was around a point ahead of us. She had slowed down to steerageway when she heard the firing, so we soon overhauled her. Day was just breaking when we put her between us and the *Dessalines*, which scornfully gave up the chase.

We discharged our cargo at Gonaives and went on to Saint Marc, the *Kearsarge* leading the way. At those two ports we took on eight hundred tons of logwood, in addition to more coffee and rum. All of our holds were so full that we had to stretch the hatch-covers to get them on, and the rest of the cargo was piled up so high on deck that the man at the wheel could just see over it. When the pilot met us off Sandy Hook he thought the *Miller* was the

island of Haiti coming up under steam. We had been away just a month, and the trip netted the McCaldins exactly $21,000, so they were well satisfied with the results. I made three more trips of the same kind, and equally profitable to the owners of the ship, before Hippolyte, with the aid of the arms we delivered to him, gained complete control of the country.

On each trip we carried ice and fresh meat for Commodore Gherardi, who continued to serve as our protector and guide. We caught him napping once when we reached Cape Haitien, to find that he had gone to Nassau for coal. He had not expected us back so soon, and, not wishing to delay matters, I went on without him. My previous experience with Legitime's war-ships had bred contempt for their gunnery, and had also shown that we could outrun them; so I did not consider that we were taking any great risk in making the circuit alone. We made Port de Paix without any trouble, but on the way to Gonaives we encountered the *Dessalines*, in broad daylight, near where she had used us as a target two months before. She was standing close inshore, to head us off, and as soon as I was sure she had made us out I bore off toward the open sea to try out her speed.

Our courses converged, as I was trying to cross her bow, and she let go at us when we were about half a mile away. Her first shot went wild, but to my surprise the second one went through our

main-boom, abaft the engines, and carried away the guide-band for the derrick-boom. Seeing that they had our range, and half suspecting they had an American gunner aboard, from the unexpected accuracy of that one shot, I turned tail to give them a smaller object to shoot at and made a runaway race of it. The shot that hit us must have been fired by a man with his eyes shut, for none of the following shells came anywhere near us, though they kept burning up powder, and the more furiously when they saw us pulling away from them. When it was clear that there really had been no improvement in their gunnery, I changed our course until they were off our quarter, and swung around in a wide circle toward Gonaives, gradually dropping the spiteful *Dessalines* astern.

On my last trip Captain James McCaldin, one of the owners, accompanied me, "for the fun of the thing." In addition to the usual cargo of arms, we carried five hundred tons of coal for Hippolyte's war-ships—the *Jacmel* and another craft known as the *Two Stacks*—which were lying at Saint Marc, where the "President" then had his headquarters. As soon as we came to an anchor at Saint Marc, in the wake of the old sloop-of-war *Galena*, to which Commodore Gherardi had transferred his flag, an aide came aboard with the information that General Hippolyte wished me to call on him at his palace. The invitation was accepted for Captain McCal-

din and myself, and as soon as we could get into our shore clothes the ceremony was performed, for it never would have done to show any lack of respect for the man whose business was so profitable to the owners of the ship. Hippolyte received us with imposing honors in a large room in a big building which was called a palace only because he occupied it. His suite was composed of twenty-five women of all colors and all equally ugly to American eyes, but clearly they were all beautiful to him. That he much preferred their society to that of his own sex was suggested by the fact that he was the only man in sight until we arrived.

Hippolyte was enthroned on a platform at one end of the long room, and it was there he welcomed us with a dignity that would have been painful if it had not been amusing. He was as black as damnation, short, fat, and with the eyes of a fox. On his looks I sized him up as much more of a scoundrel than a statesman. But there was no doubt he was brave, as that quality is reckoned in that part of the world, and he had the blacks at his back, which gave him a majority of the population. Legitime, on the other hand, was "yellow," and was hated by the full-blooded negroes because of his fraction of white blood, which carried with it a more progressive spirit.

Haiti was then, and still is, in an almost constant state of warfare between the blacks and

the yellows. The negroes are firm believers in voodoo, and in those days, at least, they were insanely devout in their cannibalistic worship of "the goat without horns," as the children sacrificed to their unholy rites were known. I have no personal knowledge of the extent to which human sacrifice is practised in Haiti to-day, but I am convinced that there is much more of it than is generally believed. Haiti is Haiti, and it is impossible that conditions there can be much improved over what they were twenty—or fifty—years ago until the United States takes a larger hand in its affairs. Haitien children are still reared in the belief that if a white man ever owns a foot of ground in their country they will all become slaves again.

After the inky general had sufficiently impressed us with his importance he relaxed a little and invited us to be seated beside him. His idolizing females grouped themselves around us so closely that, as we carried no axes, we would have had trouble in getting out in a hurry. Hippolyte congratulated me on the prompt and safe delivery of all of the cargoes of arms, and said they had been of so much assistance that the opposition to his rule was on the point of collapse. He grandly promised to make me independently wealthy as soon as Legitime was disposed of, but, as I knew he did not mean what he said, it made no difference that he neglected to keep his word. He told us all about the

progress of the war and asked many questions about the United States, which he spoke of as "a kindred nation." He referred to Benjamin Harrison as a "brother President," whose friendly influence he seemed greatly to appreciate, and expressed high praise for Secretary Blaine. His egotism was amazing, but we indicated no surprise at his vagaries, to which the thinly skirted members of his entourage murmured their adoration and approval. On the contrary, we entered into the spirit of the joke, as it was to us, and gorged him with the kind of talk he loved to hear, so that we became great friends before the meeting was over.

This reception, which we were told was an unusual honor, was but the first of a series of diverting festivities. The next morning we were advised that Hippolyte would return our call at noon and lunch with us on the ship. It was diplomatically suggested that we invite Commodore Gherardi, and he accepted without hesitation. Our breakfast, as the noonday meal is called in the West Indies, was what the society reporters would call a great success. In advance of it we were somewhat nervous through apprehension that Hippolyte might bring along a lot of his women, but he left them all at home, apparently appreciating that we did not have room enough to entertain a large gathering. Captain McCaldin toasted Hippolyte and Commodore Gherardi. In his response Hippolyte served

me with a fine assortment of honeyed words, which meant nothing except as they illustrated his highfalutin style and native insincerity.

"Captain O'Brien's nerve and daring," he said, "command our highest admiration and are worthy of our most sublime ideals. When this war is over, as it soon will be, I hope to see him admiral of the Haitien navy. That position will be offered to him, and I sincerely hope he will accept it."

Commodore Gherardi spoke briefly and diplomatically, but he made no secret of the fact that the United States government was convinced that the best interests of Haiti demanded the recognition of General Hippolyte, and expressed the hope that there soon would be none to dispute his title to the presidency.

The next evening Hippolyte entertained us at the palace. It was a debauch rather than a dinner. The one thing about the feast that remains strong in my mind is that I never had seen so much wine at one time, and I wondered where it came from and who paid for it. They had it, not only by the case, but by the wagon-load, and there was an able-bodied corps of waiters to see that every guest's glass was full all of the time. Several of Hippolyte's staff-officers were present, along with all of the women we had seen before and many more of the same kind. The whole scene was suggestive only of the Orient. I remember that Hippolyte and Cap-

tain McCaldin plenteously pledged the undying love of the United States and Haiti, but the phrases that were used I do not recall, though they were sufficiently impassioned and grandiloquent to fit the occasion. They told me later that I also made an eloquent speech; but, if I did, it was the only one I have ever delivered, and I have no recollection of it. Hippolyte, with his arms around our necks, urged Captain McCaldin and me to spend the rest of the night at the palace; but, having still some respect for our reputations, we concluded it was the part of wisdom to return to the ship, which we did with some difficulty. In parting with us Hippolyte again assured me that he would make me a millionaire and admiral of his navy as soon as the cruel war was over.

On the following night our American agent gave a dinner, to round out the exchange of compliments, but, in comparison with the one that had gone before, it must be admitted that it was rather a sad affair. All of us, with the exception of Hippolyte, on whom wine seemed to have no effect, were suffering from the night before, and, while our mutual faith was sworn to in the time-honored way, the ceremony was somewhat lacking in spontaneity, in the early hours at least. However, there was a free expression of the sentiment that we were all brothers, "fighting in a common cause and for the uplift of humanity," in whose name many

more and worse crimes have been committed than those of which we were guilty.

With the aid of the first mate we sailed the next day for Cape Haitien, en route for New York, after exchanging numerous salutes with Hippolyte's war-ships. Three days later, on August 22, 1889, Legitime, who had been unable to maintain his authority and saw a crushing defeat staring him in the face, sailed from Port au Prince for Jamaica, and Hippolyte became the undisputed ruler of Haiti. Evidently his increased duties required all of his time and thought, for he neglected to send me the million dollars he had so often promised me, or a commission as admiral of his navy; but I had no disappointments, as I had cherished no illusions.

IV

THE CALL OF CUBA LIBRE

PERHAPS it was decreed by fate that I should become a filibuster in the cause of Cuban liberty; at any rate, the summons came, and was responded to, in the way that distinguishes things which are foreordained. I was unexpectedly projected into the situation when it was filled with disaster and discouragement and the future of the "Pearl of the Antilles" seemed darker than it had been in any of the black days that had gone before.

Cuba owes her freedom more to José Marti than to any other man, for it was his noble brain that conceived and planned the War of Independence. After he had given his life for his country, it was the organization he had built up in years of labor that furnished the means with which to carry on the conflict. There have been no more men like Marti than there have been others like George Washington or Abraham Lincoln; and, in justice to his memory and to make the whole matter plain, his work should be understood. Driven from his island home at the end of the Ten Years' War, he took

refuge in New York and immediately began to plan and work out a movement that would forever blot out from the New World the tyrannical misrule of his old enemies. His chief adviser, and one of the very few who possessed his full confidence during the long years of his unselfish labor, was his old friend Horatio S. Rubens, who subsequently became general counsel for the revolutionists.

Marti's indomitable spirit took no notice of things that would have disheartened any but an extraordinary man. Though he lacked for a time the support of even his own countrymen, as a result of their successive reverses, he kept at work until he had created a far-reaching and exceedingly effective organization. Cuban clubs were secretly established in New York, Chicago, Charleston, New Orleans, Tampa, Jacksonville, Key West, and every other city where there was a Cuban colony. The members of these clubs, which were chiefly composed of cigar-makers, regularly contributed ten per cent. of their wages to the revolutionary fund. With the money thus provided Marti bought arms and ammunition, which were smuggled into Cuba in small quantities and hidden away until he was ready to strike, and perfected his plans in other ways. Though filled with the fire and fervor of the inspired patriot, he was in no way impatient; so long as he was making progress he was satisfied, and he worked slowly and systematically.

Finally all was in readiness, and arrangements were made for the launching of the revolution in January, 1895, when three vessels, which had been chartered for the expedition, loaded with arms, were to sail from Fernandina, Florida. One was to go to Santo Domingo and pick up General Maximo Gomez, the commander-in-chief, and his staff, while another went to Costa Rica for Lieutenant-General Antonio Maceo, who was to be second in command, and his party. The third ship, with Marti on board, was to proceed to Key West, where it was to be joined by a large party of Cuban exiles. The three vessels were to make a landing simultaneously at the eastern end of the island, where the arms were concealed.

Marti had moved so secretly that he supposed no one outside of his organization had an inkling of his plans, but there was a leak somewhere, through which the project became known at Washington. When the first ship put out from Fernandina it was seized by a revenue cutter and the other vessels were prevented from sailing. Undaunted by this disaster, Marti went to Santo Domingo on a regular liner and persuaded Gomez to go ahead with the plan. Maceo was summoned from Costa Rica, and the delayed expedition, much smaller in numbers than it was intended to be but with no less courage, landed from a little fishing-sloop near the city of Santiago, close to the point at which the first

large body of American troops were landed three years later to complete the conquest of Spain in Cuba.

The rebellious natives were anxiously awaiting the call to arms, and the revolutionary forces were quickly organized, first in Santiago province and then in Camaguey and Santa Clara. Marti lived long enough to see the movement he had inaugurated well under way, but it was the greatest tragedy of the war that he did not survive to witness the realization of his life's one dream. Knowing nothing of fear and disdainful of caution, he constantly exposed himself to danger, in spite of all that Gomez and his officers could do to restrain him. While far in advance of the main body of troops he was killed by a small force of Spaniards at Dos Rios, in Santiago province, on May 15, 1895. As in the case of Maceo, who was killed near Havana eighteen months later, his death was almost accidental, and it was some time before the Spaniards discovered the rank and importance of their victim. Then they counted themselves heroes, and were so proclaimed in Havana.

The death of Marti depressed the spirits of the revolutionists for a time almost to the point of complete discouragement. The field leaders were ready enough to continue the fight, regardless of the Spanish odds against them, but they realized that without active support in the United States they could not hope to keep up an effective

warfare for want of arms and other supplies. They looked to Rubens, who was a native New-Yorker, to find some one to take charge of the organization which Marti had created, and, in casting about for a suitable man for the place, he hit on Tomas Estrada Palma, who was then conducting a school for boys at Central Valley, New York. Like Marti and many others, he had left Cuba at the end of the Ten Years' War, and his large estates had been confiscated. The Spaniards offered to restore them if he would return and take the oath of allegiance, but he swore he would never set foot on the island again until it was free. Palma was at first reluctant to take any part in the revolution, which he considered hopeless, but two months after Marti's death he yielded to the arguments of Rubens, and was appointed Cuban delegate at New York.

Strictly speaking, there was no Junta in this country during the war; there were delegates in all of the cities where there was a considerable Cuban population. Those who were most active were Mr. Palma and J. A. Huau, of Jacksonville. They worked together harmoniously throughout the war, but afterward became enemies. Mr. Palma contributed very little of his own means to the revolution, and was made the first President of Cuba; Mr. Huau sacrificed his whole fortune, and went without reward of any kind. There were many offices to which he might have been appointed, in slight recognition of

his invaluable services, and any one of which he would have filled with credit, but none was offered him. In explanation of his failure to reward Mr. Huau it has been stated, and with some truth, that when Mr. Palma was elected President he had been so long away from Cuba that he did not know his own people; he felt that to make his administration a success he must have men around him whom he could trust absolutely, so he distributed the best positions among his relatives. The fact remains, however, that his ingratitude toward Mr. Huau, as it was so regarded, was one of the things which eventually deprived him of the sympathy and support of a majority of the Cubans.

Because of his standing and his location, and for the further reason that all of the finances were handled through the New York office, Mr. Palma was recognized as the chief American representative of the revolutionists. He lacked much of the force and initiative of Marti, but he had many influential friends in this country, and it was considered that his personal popularity would prove of much advantage to the cause. His own countrymen regarded him as more of an American than a Cuban on account of his long residence here, but they believed he would be more useful for that reason. His devotion to Cuba was unquestioned, and he was as rigidly honest as Marti, though not of such a self-sacrificing nature.

The discovery of Marti's expedition, which indicated considerable backing and suggested a far-reaching organization, put the Spaniards on their guard. Representations made to President Cleveland and Secretary of State Olney by Dupuy de Lome, the Spanish Minister at Washington, resulted in orders to the Revenue Cutter Service and to all customs officers to exert themselves to the utmost to prevent filibustering expeditions from leaving this country for Cuba. In his efforts to make it impossible for aid to reach the Cubans, De Lome engaged the Pinkerton Detective Agency, and also employed an army of spies, who worked independently of each other, to watch every one suspected of connection with the revolutionary movement.

The Pinkertons did legitimate detective work, but the Spanish spies were always ready and anxious to use foul means when they failed to accomplish their ends through the shrewdness they were supposed to possess; they did not hesitate even when it came to arranging for wholesale murder. They bribed men right and left to give them information and commercialized assassination by employing traitors to sink vessels carrying arms to Cuba, in the hope of terrorizing ship-owners and filibusters. With the advance information they had purchased concerning the expeditions that were thus lost at sea, the Spaniards could easily have prevented their departure, or had them overhauled by a

revenue cutter after they had sailed, but they believed it would produce a more deterrent influence to have them mysteriously disappear well off shore, without any regard to the loss of life that was certain to ensue. It was, of course, expected that the traitor who sank the ship would take proper precautions to see that he was one of those who were saved, but, fortunately, in some instances their plans miscarried and the murderers went down with their victims.

Another favorite method of the Spaniards was to induce the captain of a ship that was taking out an expedition to tell them, in return for a large sum of money—$5,000 being the ordinary price—where he was to land. When the filibusters and their arms had all been put ashore they would find themselves surrounded by a concealed force of waiting Spanish troops, and in a few minutes they were massacred to a man, for no prisoners were ever taken in such cases. It seems incredible that captains could be found who were vile enough to sell men's lives for a few paltry dollars; to take patriots to what they knew was certain death; to travel with them as shipmates for days and then put them ashore, knowing they would be murdered in half an hour—but there were a number who did it. Most of them are now with the doubly damned, where they belong, and the few who are still alive probably wish they were dead. Of course, these villainous captains suffered no injury; that was part

of the agreement. If it was necessary for the sake of appearance to seize the ship that landed the filibusters, the vessel was invariably released within a few days, and the captain was given a bonus to compensate him for his polite detention.

In consequence of the activity of the horde of spies and their willingness to hand out money to any one who would betray a secret, there was much treachery, though never among the Cubans who had anything to do with the organization, and for some months things went strongly against Mr. Palma. Gomez and Maceo were calling for arms and supplies with which to continue the war, but none could be delivered to them. Numerous expeditions were planned, but all of them were either held up just as they were ready to sail, or sunk at sea, or run into traps when they reached Cuba, involving great and unnecessary loss of life, heavy and useless drains on the revolutionary treasury, and bitter disappointments to the rebels.

In January, 1896, the steam fisherman *Hawkins*, under Captain Hall, was sent away from Montauk Point with a cargo of arms and a party of Cubans who were going down to join Gomez. Her sea-cocks were treacherously opened a few hours after her departure, and she sank off the south shore of Long Island, carrying down Jack Lynch, the chief engineer, and ten men. The man who was paid to sink the ship went down

with her, but I have always suspected that he did not meet death by drowning. The cargo, of course, was a total loss. About the same time it was discovered that the captain of the *Commodore*, which, after having been held up for a long while at Charleston, was then lying at Wilmington, had accepted $5,000 to reveal to the Spaniards the landing-place of an expedition he was preparing to take out. On learning this Horatio Rubens went to Wilmington, "borrowed" from the captain all he had left of the bribe, which was $200—he had sent the balance to a relative in Brooklyn—and kicked him off the ship. The captain subsequently admitted that he had received $5,000 from the Spaniards, but claimed that he had intended to "double-cross" them by telling them he was bound for some point far away from his real destination. He was drowned in the Gulf of St. Lawrence a few years later, while bringing a ship around from the Lakes to New York.

In the same ill-fated month of January a cargo of arms was seized on the steamship *Bermuda* while she was lying off Bedloe's Island in New York harbor, just as she was about to sail for Cuba with General Calixto Garcia, who was known in the Ten Years' War as "The Terror," and several other prominent Cubans. There was a Pinkerton man on the *Bermuda*, who sent in reports of everything that happened, and it was on information furnished by him that she

was detained an hour before she was due to sail. Her collection of hostile hardware was put ashore under a guard and was not released until May, 1898; and, to prevent any possibility of the expedition getting away, the ship also was seized, and deputy United States marshals were placed in charge of her. She was subsequently released, and before she finally sailed another cargo was spirited aboard. It included 2,500 rifles, a 12-pounder Hotchkiss field-gun, 1,500 revolvers, 200 short carbines, 1,000 pounds of dynamite, 1,200 machetes, and an abundance of ammunition. All of the stuff was packed in boxes marked "codfish" and "medicines."

General Garcia, who was one of the few men who have ever escaped from the terrible Spanish prison at Ceuta, Morocco, had made several attempts to get to Cuba and take a hand in the war, and this last disappointment completely disheartened him, as it did most of the Cubans. There was still more trouble in store for him, for on March 13th, nearly two months after the seizure of the cargo, General Garcia, Benjamin J. Guerra, treasurer of the New York revolutionary delegation; Bernardo J. Bueno; John D. Hart, owner of the *Bermuda;* Captain John Brabazon, master of the ship; and Samuel Hughes, a navigator employed by the Cubans, were indicted in the Federal Court for engaging to sail on a filibustering trip to Cuba. They were arrested at once and placed under bonds of $2,500 each.

This discouraging development so added to the anxieties of the Cubans that it made them desperate.

The next day, March 14th, which was Saturday, Mr. Hart sent for me and asked me to take command of the expedition. He explained the situation in detail and did not attempt to conceal its dangers as they appeared to him, though, having been in the same business before, I knew more about that part of it than he did. He said the Cubans were extremely depressed by the continued disasters which treachery had brought upon them, and that unless this expedition could be cleared and safely landed he feared they would be forced to abandon their fight for liberty. He paid me the compliment of expressing confidence that I could perform the task. General Garcia, he said, intended to jump his bail and go with the ship, and he pointed out that the arrival of the famous old fighter in Cuba, with a large cargo of arms, would put new life into the revolution. He offered me $500 for the trip; the depleted treasury prevented him from paying more.

Financially, the proposition did not appeal to me at all, but that was the least interesting feature of it. Any sort of a filibustering expedition would have tempted me away from prosaic piloting, provided it offered any reasonable amount of adventure, but, above and beyond my natural inclination in that direction, my sympathies were strongly with the Cubans, and

I had more than once thought of offering them my services. Here was a chance to be of real service to them, at the time when they were most in need of an honest man who knew his business, so Mr. Hart did not have to wait long for my acceptance of his overtures.

"When will you be ready to start?" he inquired.

"I'm ready now," I told him. "Clear the ship for Vera Cruz, Mexico, and we will sail in the morning. Have General Garcia and his party go to Atlantic City to-night and I will pick them up off there. Send them down on the last train to-night so they will not have to hang around there long, and keep them away from the town. They can arrange with a fishing-sloop to bring them out to us. If all goes well we will be off Atlantic City to-morrow forenoon; if we are followed by an inquisitive revenue cutter I will loaf along during the day, double on my track and lose her during the night, and be standing by to take the general and his companions aboard at sunrise on Monday."

There was no way of proving that we were not going to Vera Cruz, and, as there would be no revolutionists on board when we left New York, the government would have no good reason for again seizing the ship, so I felt little anxiety on that score. Mr. Hart was pleased with the plan which I proposed, and after it had been approved by the Cuban leaders it was worked

out in detail, to guard against any misunderstandings or mistakes. I then went out to the ship with Mr. Hart and took command. The *Bermuda* was a good thirteen-knot boat registering one thousand tons. She had become too small for the trade between New York and the island for which she was named, and had recently been sold to Mr. Hart by the Quebec Steamship Company. She had new boilers and engines, and was in splendid condition. I looked her over carefully, and also sized up the crew. Those who looked as though they might "leak" were paid off and new men were sent out to take their places. Banked fires were ordered with a good head of steam, but no one was told when we expected to sail. To give the impression that we were in no hurry I returned to the city and spent the night at the old Stevens House, in lower Broadway. I was then living in Arlington, New Jersey, which is only a fifteen-minute ride from New York, but I did not go home after our arrangements were completed, nor send any word to my family; they had become accustomed to having me disappear suddenly, but they always expected I would eventually turn up safely. If they did not know when or where I was going, there could be no words dropped which neighbors and detectives might put together.

At four o'clock on Sunday morning I went aboard the *Bermuda* and proceeded to get under

way. We were not long about it, but before we were clear of the Narrows three tugboats, filled with deputy United States marshals, customs officers, and newspaper men, were tearing after us. They came so close that for a few minutes it looked as if they intended to board us, but they contented themselves with ranging alongside and peppering us with questions. I told them nothing more than that we did not have General Garcia, nor any of his friends, on board. They hung onto us down through the lower bay and out past Sandy Hook, without getting enough information to pay for a pound of the coal they were furiously burning to keep up with us. I don't know how far they might have followed us, but, when we were well clear of the Hook, a kind fortune sent along a blinding snowstorm, which soon chased them back home.

V

TREASON AFLOAT

AFTER the tugs that set out to follow the *Bermuda* from New York had been lost in the snowstorm that was sent to aid us, we stood on to the eastward until we were too far from the shore for our smoke to be followed in case the weather cleared suddenly, and then turned south and ran down to Atlantic City to pick up General Calixto Garcia and his companions. They came out to meet us in a fishing-boat from Great Egg Harbor, flying a white flag to identify them, and we got them aboard in short order and proceeded southward at full speed. The whole movement was executed so quickly that the detectives were taken off their guard, and it was not until four days later that they were sure as to just what had happened. Then a frantic telegram was sent from Washington to all collectors of customs on the Atlantic coast ordering the seizure of the *Bermuda*; but we were halfway to our destination by that time.

With General Garcia, who was the central figure in the party, were Dr. Joaquin Castillo Duany, subdelegate at New York under Mr.

Palma; and General Emilio Nuñez, chief of expeditions for the revolutionists. Dr. Enrique Hernandez, who had an office at Ninetieth Street and Madison Avenue, New York, left a profitable practice to go along as staff-surgeon for General Garcia. They were accompanied by nearly one hundred of their countrymen who at the last minute had taken advantage of what seemed to be a favorable opportunity to go home and engage in the war. General Garcia breathed easier when he saw the Jersey coast going down astern, with no pursuing ships in sight, but he was still oppressed by the fear that the expedition would meet with no better fortune than those which had preceded it.

"I never expect to see Cuba again," he kept telling his staff-officers.

"Don't you worry about that, General," I told him. "You are going to get to Cuba this time."

"That's what they have all told me," he replied, mournfully.

"I never have told you that before, have I?"

"No."

"Then take my word for it. This time we will get you there."

My confidence impressed him a little, and he lost some of his melancholy; but it was not until we got within sight of Cuba that he took a really cheerful view of things.

At an appointed place below Cape Henry we

hove to long enough to pick up eight large, flat-bottomed dories, in which to land our passengers and the large cargo of arms. In all filibustering expeditions it is essential to put the cargo ashore as quickly as possible and get away, to the more surely avoid detection. Using the ship's boats, it would have taken us two days to land all of the stuff we carried, and it was out of the question to take on the dories at New York, so it had been arranged that they should be waiting for us at a designated time and place.

With our cargo complete, we took a circuitous course, to avoid coastwise traffic and wandering war-ships and revenue cutters, for the eastern end of Cuba, going out around the Bahamas and down through Crooked Island Passage. This involved some loss of time, but a few days made no difference as compared with the greater safety this roundabout way assured. We were to land in a little indentation in the coast between Points Maravi and Aguacate, five miles west of Baracoa lighthouse, which is about thirty miles west of Cape Maysi, the eastern end of the island.

On the afternoon of March 25th I hove to off Inagua Island and looked the engines over carefully, examined all of the bearings, cleaned the fires, and gave the firemen a lesson in smokeless stoking, which is another thing no filibuster can afford to overlook. More than one expedition, otherwise well planned, has come to grief because

proper precautions were not taken to prevent telltale smoke from pouring out of the ship's funnels. The wise way to put on coal, when it is desired to hoist no signal which may result in capture, is to drop it in a heap inside of the furnace door, instead of throwing it far back and scattering it, and allow it to coke, after which it can be sliced up and pushed back. This trick I learned in my early filibustering days. The fire that is handled in this way makes just as much steam as is produced by the ordinary method, and gives off only a very little thin, white smoke which can scarcely be seen even at a short distance.

We had on board two Cuban pilots who, because of their supposed familiarity with the coast, were to fix the course as soon as we made out the land and direct the ship to the point at which the landing was to be made. One of them was a traitor, as I had suspected for some time before it was proved, and the other was at best an ignoramus. We raised Baracoa light soon after dark. The pilot who had been bribed to lead us into a trap declared it was the light at Cape Maysi, and insisted that we run down the coast for thirty-five miles, where I had no doubt the Spaniards were waiting for us in force, both afloat and ashore. The other pilot, as he was called, agreed with his partner as to our location. I knew where we were, and I knew they were wrong. Aside from my reckoning

the light at Cape Maysi could be seen for eighteen miles, while the one at Baracoa was only an eight-mile light, so there could be no mistaking them by any man who was competent to command a catamaran on an inland lake.

Vigorously and volubly the two pilots swore that we were headed for Cape Maysi, but I refused to change the course, as they demanded. When they saw that they could not influence me, the traitor undertook to convince General Nuñez, who, as chief of expeditions, was in supreme authority on the ship, that I was betraying them, as they had often been betrayed before, and that if I was permitted to have my way they would soon find themselves in a snare from which there would be no escape.

I could not speak much Spanish, but I knew enough of it to understand the argument that was being made for my discomfiture, and the situation was not a pleasant one. General Nuñez knew nothing about me except what Hart had told him, and, as the Cubans had suffered so much from false friends that it had become an old story, it was natural to suppose, it seemed to me, that he would put more confidence in one of his own countrymen than in a comparative stranger. Still, the general appeared to have faith in me, and as the best means of strengthening it, and at the same time stopping the chatter and saving a lot of bother, I ordered the two alleged pilots off the bridge. The traitor did

not move rapidly enough to suit my rather impatient frame of mind, so I placed two or three hard kicks where they would be of the greatest assistance to him, much to the astonishment of General Garcia and his party. General Nuñez said not a word throughout this proceeding, which momentarily relieved the tension we were all under, and I had great respect for him from that moment.

Setting our course by the lighthouse, I headed in for the landing-place. Naturally, we were showing no lights. The engine-room hatch was covered with tarpaulins, and there was a canvas cover over the binnacle light with a small hole through which just enough of the compass to steer by could be seen. The Cubans are inveterate smokers, but I had told General Nuñez there must be no smoking that night, under penalty of death, and he had given the order. When we were within about five miles of the coast I made out a Spanish gunboat coming up from the eastward, hugging the shore; probably she was on her way to the trap into which the renegade pilot had planned to lead us. Before any one else saw the war-ship I swung around in a wide circle to let her go by, and then stood on into the bight. The pilot who was only a fool lived close to where the cargo was to be landed, and when we got close inshore he saw his house, at the foot of Anvil Hill.

"Oh, look!" he whispered, excitedly; "there

my home—there my home! Captain O'Brien was right, Captain O'Brien was right." He appeared to think he had made a great discovery.

The deep water at that point prevented an anchorage, but it also enabled us to stand in close to the shore. Ed Murphy, my mate, was landed first. After scouting around in search of hidden Spaniards he waved a lantern as a signal that the coast was clear. General Garcia and his staff, in full uniform, were then sent ashore. There were tears in the old warrior's eyes when he gripped my hand as he went over the side; and he probably would have hugged me, in the fashion of the country, if I hadn't backed away. "You kept your word, Captain," he said, in a voice shaking with emotion. "The others lied to me, but you didn't. We never will forget you. I hope you can continue in our service, for we need you." The general, too, kept his word. He frequently mentioned me in his official reports, said many pleasant things about me to men in and out of the organization, and up to the day of his death was one of my best friends.

Following the landing of the officers we proceeded to get the rest of the Cubans and the arms and ammunition ashore as quickly as possible. It was about 10.30 P. M. when this work was begun, and it was completed by three o'clock in the morning. The traitorous pilot got away in the first boat-load of passengers, evidently in the

hope of escaping, but word was brought back to me that he was literally cut to pieces by his companions a moment after he landed. He well deserved his fate. His partner was kicked and prodded with machetes all the way to the door of his cabin.

Soon after General Garcia landed, his little force was joined by several hundred rebels who had come down to meet him and assist in carrying the arms back into the mountains. While our cargo was being landed five Spanish warships were lying just around the point in Baracoa Bay, not more than five miles away. The next morning their commanders learned what had happened, and desperate but futile efforts were made to capture Garcia.

We steamed away as soon as the last boat-load was clear of the ship, and by daylight were around Cape Maysi and on our way to Puerto Cortes, Honduras, where we took on a cargo of bananas. General Nuñez, who was in a hurry to get back to New York with the good news, left us there and went to New Orleans on the fast little steamer that carried the report of the drawing of the old Louisiana lottery, which, perforce, had been transferred to Honduras. We stayed at Puerto Cortes no longer than was necessary, for the *Bermuda* was a British ship; and there was a good chance that a war-ship flying that flag might drop in and make trouble for us, for it was soon whispered around that we

had landed a big expedition in Cuba. Soon after our departure this suspicion was verified, to the satisfaction of the Honduran government, and the old Scotch shipping agent through whom I had purchased the bananas was compelled to pay a fine, amounting to $5 for each member of the *Bermuda's* crew, for having done business with a filibuster. I had paid him enough for the fruit so that he could afford to stand this loss. He wrote Mr. Hart that, while he would be glad to sell him all of the bananas he wanted, he hoped he would send no more filibustering ships down that way.

Before leaving New York I had urged that the ship return to that port instead of to Philadelphia, where Mr. Hart had his headquarters. I expected we would all be arrested, and I had pointed out that there would be much less chance of convicting us in New York than in Philadelphia. In New York, with its large and influential Cuban colony, there was a great deal of public sentiment in favor of the revolution; while in Philadelphia they didn't even know there was a war on in Cuba, and the Federal judge there believed that all filibusters ought to be hanged. Consequently, I was surprised when we put in at the Delaware Breakwater for orders to find directions to proceed to Philadelphia. As I had no desire to get tangled up in a lot of trouble that could be plainly seen, and which might possibly prevent further activity

of the sort I liked, I construed these orders to apply only to the ship. Thirty miles below Philadelphia the tug which had the vessel in tow put me ashore in New Jersey, and I proceeded to my home near Newark.

As I had expected, the *Bermuda's* arrival at Philadelphia was quickly followed by the arrest of Mr. Hart and Ed Murphy, the mate, on a charge of violating the neutrality laws by "conducting an armed, organized expedition against Spain," and the crew were held as witnesses. General Nuñez and I were included in the indictment; but we went into retirement until word was brought to us that, if we would submit to arrest, our cases would be transferred to New York for trial. That was satisfactory to us, and we furnished bail. Our trial came on in the following July. Good old Judge Brown, who would have been a noble filibuster if he had not been a great jurist, again defined the difference between "an armed, organized expedition" and one which simply carried arms. Horatio Rubens, in our defense, argued that as the men and arms had been taken on board and put ashore separately, they had no relation to each other, so far as had been established by the evidence, and he contended that at the most we were guilty only of smuggling arms into Cuba, an offense with which an American court had nothing to do. He pleaded so eloquently that the jury disagreed; it was said to have stood eight to

four for conviction. We never were tried again, but the indictment was held over our heads, to annoy us, until some time after the opening of the Spanish-American War, when it was dismissed along with a lot of others by order of Attorney-General Griggs.

The trial of Captain Brabazon, which came up at about the same time as our own, and in which all of us were interested, illustrated the rare genius of Horatio Rubens. Captain Brabazon had preceded me in command of the *Bermuda*, and had been arrested for trying to get out of New York with the Garcia expedition. He was prosecuted by Assistant-District-Attorney Hinman, who had him dead to rights. In presenting the government's case Mr. Hinman established all of the facts connected with the attempted departure of the expedition, the seizure of the arms, and the arrest of Captain Brabazon, along with General Garcia and his companions, all of whom had forfeited their bail.

This was all expected; but a good-sized charge of dynamite was exploded in the camp of the defense when a Secret Service agent testified that Captain Brabazon, while somewhat under the influence of liquor, had confessed that he knew he was in command of a filibustering expedition, and that his confession had been reduced to writing and sworn to. This was the first intimation Mr. Rubens had that

the captain had made a confession, for he had been ashamed to admit it.

Though taken completely by surprise, Rubens saw his way out of the muddle. In ways of which he was a master, but without making any definite statements, he conveyed to the judge and jury the idea that at the proper time he would attack the authenticity of the alleged confession. Mr. Hinman got the same impression and made the fortunate mistake of not putting the confession in evidence. From what had been said he figured that the captain would go on the stand and deny that he had made any confession, whereupon he expected to tear the defense to pieces. Mr. Rubens encouraged this belief by stating to the judge in open court, in response to a question from Mr. Hinman which that gentleman considered adroit, that "the defense would not take up more than half a day."

When the government closed its case, Rubens set off a bomb himself by announcing that he would present no defense, the inference being that the evidence introduced by the prosecution was so weak that he did not consider it necessary to combat it. This altogether unexpected move left Mr. Hinman with a useless confession on his hands, for, under the rules of legal procedure, there was then no way of getting it into the record.

Rubens made the opening argument to the

jury. He denied that there had been any confession. "It is foolish to suppose," he said, with a courtly bow in the direction of Mr. Hinman, "that so able a lawyer as the assistant district attorney would have neglected to introduce such a damaging piece of evidence if it had been available."

Mr. Hinman sneered audibly at this thrust and tossed the captain's signed confession across the table to Mr. Rubens, in a theatrical manner calculated to impress the jury. Rubens glanced through the document and saw that the captain had told enough to send all of the defendants to the penitentiary. Without the quiver of an eyelash he threw his head back, and roared: "There is nothing in this," referring probably to the method which had been employed rather than to the confession, though the jury got the meaning which he wished to convey. "I ask the court to direct the jury to disregard this whole incident, except for the fact that the assistant district attorney has acted improperly." This instruction was promptly given by the judge, who was plainly annoyed by Mr. Hinman's tactics. The judge did not know whether there had been a confession or not. His attitude indicated the belief that if there was such a confession as had been testified to, it was very strange that Mr. Hinman had not introduced it when he was presenting the government's case.

Rubens retained possession of the confession throughout his argument, and frequently waved it before the jury, as though he wished above all things that he could show it to them and let them see for themselves, as he inferentially had seen, that there was nothing in it which reflected on the defendant. He could have said all he had to say in half an hour, but he injected an eloquent speech on Cuban liberty simply to take up enough time so that Mr. Hinman would not have an opportunity to reply to his argument until after lunch.

During the noon recess Captain Brabazon was taken in hand. He was told that in his argument the assistant district attorney would allege that he had made a confession, and that when this statement was made he must rise to his feet in righteous indignation and pronounce it wholly false. He was repeatedly instructed to be very dignified, but also very earnest. He learned his lesson perfectly; but as soon as he could get away from his instructors he proceeded to take considerable red liquor aboard. He wanted to make a success of his part of the performance, and, besides, he was filled with remorse.

When Mr. Hinman reached Brabazon in his closing argument, he turned slowly around and faced him, drew himself up to his full height, and dramatically declared: "He DID confess."

In an instant the captain was on his feet and shaking his fist at Hinman. With his eyes

blazing and his whole manner portraying outraged innocence, he shouted, in a voice that could have been heard the full length of a full-rigged ship in any gale that ever blew: "You're a blankety blanked, double blanked liar, you red-headed—"

Rubens was horrified. He was unprepared for such a torrent of denial and denunciation, and there was no mistaking his surprise. He pushed Brabazon, who was really fighting mad, into a chair and held him there until he had quieted down, at the same time admonishing and abusing him in a suppressed voice, though it was not sufficiently suppressed so that it failed to reach the judge. Then he turned to the court and fervently apologized for the captain's inexcusable outburst of virtuous indignation. He fully expected the captain would be sent to jail for contempt of court; but the judge seemed impressed by his earnestness and let him off with a lecture.

There was not much to the case after that. Mr. Hinman was so taken aback that he cut his argument short, being careful to avoid any further reference to the doughty captain, and it took the jury only a few minutes to return a verdict of acquittal. So does justice sometimes triumph over law. In the exciting years that followed, Mr. Rubens fought and won many hard cases, but never one that was attended by such startling surprises on both sides.

VI

OUTWITTING AN ARMY OF SLEUTHS

WHEN I returned to New York, after having landed General Garcia and the *Bermuda's* cargo of arms in Cuba, I found that Mr. Palma and his associates were so pleased with the manner in which the expedition had been handled that they were disposed to be enthusiastic. They insisted that I become a part of their organization and remain with them until the close of the war; and I finally gave them my word that I would do so. This decision was prompted by nothing but sympathy with the cause for which they were fighting and the love of adventure; for their treasury was always too low to permit any large salaries, and I could have made much more money as a pilot. If I had not by this time had a wife and family to provide for I might have served without pay, but I had to consider them. It was agreed that one hundred dollars should be sent to them every month, which would cover their expenses, as I owned my own home, and that I would be paid three hundred dollars for every expedition I landed. This latter, I may add, was not always paid when funds were un-

available; but that did not in any degree lessen my enthusiasm. When it is remembered that the owners of the tugboats we used were paid ten thousand dollars for every cargo that was shipped on them, whether or not it was landed in Cuba, and that they risked only property, at a very high premium, while I risked my life repeatedly for practically nothing in the way of financial reward, I think it will be conceded that I contributed something toward the freedom of Cuba.

I was appointed navigator for the department of expeditions, which was reorganized by General Nuñez and made a really effective instrument. The other members of it were: José Eliseo Cartaya and Pablo Rojo, aides; Laureano Prado and Frank Pagluchi, engineers; and Justo Carillo, secretary to General Nuñez. Colonel Federico Perez Carbo was included for a time. It is worth while here to tell something of the character of Cartaya and sketch his romantic career, for he was one of the real heroes of the war and one of those who sacrificed most for their country. He was with me on practically all of my expeditions, and a better or braver companion no man could want. Often have I seen him at handgrips with death, but never have I known him to flinch or falter; he cared no more for whistling bullets than for a pattering rain.

He was born in Matanzas, that home of the rugged old Canary Islanders whence come many

of the best Cubans; and in 1876, when only eighteen years old, he was arrested, along with eight or ten others, for taking part in a revolutionary conspiracy incident to the Ten Years' War. On account of his youth, and the fact that he could not be made to talk, either about himself or the others, he was eventually released; but his friend, Carlos Lopez, who was one of the chief conspirators, was sentenced to death. After all efforts to secure his release had failed, Cartaya adopted a most daring method to effect his liberation. He joined the Spanish Volunteers, who did guard duty at all government buildings, including the prisons. The Volunteers were composed of Cubans who were loyal to Spain. They were more bitter and more brutal than the Spaniards themselves, and were the more cordially hated by the rest of the Cubans. Therefore there was much cursing of Cartaya when he became one of them.

His real purpose was not suspected, and he was made a corporal as a reward for his supposed change of heart. He had to wait several months before an opportunity to carry out his plan presented itself. Then the sergeant of the guard was taken sick one evening, and Cartaya found himself in command of the squad stationed at the prison in which his friend was confined. He went to the prison and started to take Lopez out, explaining that he was taking him to see his family and would return with him before morn-

ing. The sentry who was on post at the door of the jail refused to allow the removal of Lopez, so Cartaya locked him up in the guard-house for disobedience of orders and posted a new sentry, who had more respect for his superior officer. To insure a less vigorous search he also released, on the same pretext, a brother of Florence Beralta, the captain of the rural district, who was locked up for some minor offense. Cartaya and Lopez lost themselves in the hills, and ten days later, at a distant point, were spirited aboard a schooner bound for New Orleans. Cartaya went to New York, and for ten years was employed by one of the largest cigar firms in the city. Then he moved to Tampa as manager of one of the principal factories, with an interest in the profits.

When he disappeared from Matanzas with Lopez, a reward of five thousand dollars was offered for his capture, and he was sentenced, by default, to twelve years in prison. The general amnesty which ended the Ten Years' War did not cover Cartaya, as he was a deserter from the army; and it took more than ten years of hard work on the part of his father to procure a special pardon from the Queen Regent of Spain. Immediately on the issuance of this pardon he took out his final papers as an American citizen. Subsequently he visited his old home, but refused to live in Cuba so long as it was under the Spanish flag. When the last revolution was

launched he was making more than ten thousand dollars a year; but he at once resigned his position and offered Mr. Palma his services, without pay. He was assigned to the department of expeditions, where he served with such distinction that at the close of the war he was the only man whom Mr. Palma recommended to the War Department for a position in Cuba under the American occupation. He was made an inspector of customs at Havana, and was rapidly promoted until he was appointed collector of the port by General Wood. After abolishing graft and putting the service on a high plane of efficiency he resigned to go into business for himself.

Dr. Joaquin Castillo Duany, who ranked next to Mr. Palma in the delegation, was a man of the same type. He had been a surgeon in the United States navy, and was a member of the *Bear* polar expedition. He resigned his commission to fight for his own country. Throughout the latter part of the revolution he suffered from a malady which demanded prompt surgical attention; but he refused to take time to be operated on. When he went to Paris, at the close of the war, and placed himself in the hands of the best European specialists, it was too late, and he died there. He was unqualifiedly honest, and if he had lived he probably would have succeeded Mr. Palma as President of Cuba. General Nuñez was another true patriot. He was clean, brave, and shrewd, and the thing dearest

to his heart was the freedom of Cuba. He fought valiantly through the Ten Years' War, and, like Cartaya, would not consent to remain in Cuba under Spanish rule.

Made up of such men, it was natural that the department of expeditions should accomplish what it set out to do. We had our own agents at different points, and our own method of communicating with one another. It was all very simple, but also very effective, in preventing any of our plans from becoming known in advance to men who might betray them. Our secret cipher code, which was used for both telegraphic and mail correspondence, was based on a lot of pocket dictionaries, all exactly alike, which we picked up at an old book-store. In deciphering a message one would look up the code word in his dictionary and then turn to the word in the same position on the second page following, which would be the true word. This system permitted any number of changes in the positions of the two words. The key was carried in our heads, so the loss of a dictionary could reveal no secrets, nor even suggest any, though it could cause inconvenience. I lost mine once in Wilmington, North Carolina, just as I was preparing to get an expedition away, and I had to go back into the bush and hide until a new one was sent me by a messenger. When two men were sent out separately by different routes, with instructions to meet at a certain time and place,

each of them was given half of a card which had been torn in two so as to leave irregular edges. The matching of these halves served to identify the men, who often were strangers to each other, and vouched for each to the other.

By these and other similar methods, suggested by some experience in baffling detectives, we guarded against the successful operation of the spies who were constantly at our heels. From the day that I returned from the *Bermuda* expedition until after the United States declared war against Spain, my home in Arlington, New Jersey, was watched night and day by at least two detectives, and for a part of the time by four. When there were only two of them one watched the front of the house from a patch of woods across the street, in which he ridiculously tried to conceal himself, while the other stood guard over the rear. They never bothered me much except when they sought to pry into the privacy of my home life by peering through the shutters at night. Mrs. O'Brien rather broke them of that bad habit when she "inadvertently" threw a pot of boiling water over one of them when she heard him sneaking around in the dark on the back porch. After that I had a few powerful bear-traps concealed in strategic positions about the house every night, and the detectives lost much of their interest in my strictly private affairs, though they relaxed none of their legitimate watchfulness.

OUTWITTING THE SLEUTHS

My son Fisher, as brave and brainy a boy as ever lived, evolved a scheme for beating the detectives at their own game, which caused them a lot of worry. Every time I went to New York Fisher would follow me by the next train, with an understanding as to where he would find me when he arrived. The detectives who were watching the house, and whom I knew by sight, trailed me to the city, where, having telephoned ahead that we were coming, they turned me over to two new men, who were supposed to follow me wherever I went. I would lead the strangers on an aimless walk around town until I was sure Fisher had spotted them, and then drop in at some convenient saloon. They would soon line up at the other end of the bar. Then Fisher would come in, and, standing close beside me but without giving any sign of recognition, order a drink. While he was waiting for it he would whisper: "The one in the brown hat and the fellow on his right with the black mustache," or whatever description fitted the pair.

Knowing my men, it was easy for me to lose them if I had anything on hand which I did not wish them to know about—for there were a number of places that I sometimes visited which had means of egress beyond the ken of any sleuth. If I was in the city merely for some routine conference with the Cubans, and did not care whether or not I was followed, I would often go up to the detectives and buy them a

drink and tell them where I was going. Their chagrin, when they saw that I knew them, was highly amusing. They were always puzzled to know how I picked them up so quickly; but, though they never suspected it, all of the credit was due to Fisher.

The detectives and spies were active enough to earn all they were paid, but they rarely found out anything we were not willing they should know. The result was that until our plans were ready for execution there was no one outside of the little inner circle who had any definite idea as to what we proposed to do. When the time came for action we knew whom we could trust; but we trusted them only so far as was required by their share in the proceedings. The treachery from which the Cubans had suffered on every hand prior to the landing of General Garcia practically ceased from that time.

On July 27, 1896, just as we had the department well organized and were preparing to get down to business, President Cleveland issued his second neutrality proclamation, which was much more vigorous than the one that had preceded it a year before. In it "citizens of the United States and others within their jurisdiction" were warned to abstain from violating the neutrality laws by in any way contributing "to the armed resistance to the established government of Spain then prevailing in the island of Cuba." They were notified that they must not furnish

arms to the rebels, nor aid in the transportation of any military expedition, and that all violations of the law would be vigorously punished. To that end the co-operation of "all good citizens" was invoked and all executive officers of the United States were enjoined to "use the utmost diligence in preventing, prosecuting, and punishing infractions thereof."

This plain-spoken pronunciamento assured us that we could expect nothing but active hostility from Washington; but, as we had counted on nothing else, we were not unduly depressed. Neither Mr. Cleveland nor Mr. McKinley, who succeeded him, was influenced in the slightest degree by public sympathy for the Cubans. They complied with both the letter and spirit of the law and did everything in their power to prevent and punish filibustering. If, in their unofficial hearts, they wished well of the brave fight that was being made to establish a sister republic in Cuba, they concealed that sentiment so well that no one ever suspected its existence.

Clearly enough, Mr. Cleveland's second warning was aimed particularly at the Cuban delegation in New York; and it had the effect of considerably upsetting and unnerving Mr. Palma. He was for leaving this country at once and establishing headquarters in Santo Domingo, where there is always much sympathy for a revolutionary movement, domestic or foreign. However, with full confidence in our new or-

ganization and its ability to handle things in a manner that would avoid any serious trouble, we persuaded him that such a course was both unnecessary and unwise. Instead of running away, we argued, the proper way to reply to Mr. Cleveland's proclamation was to send to Cuba, as quickly as possible, the largest expedition that had ever been landed there. The effect of this, we pointed out, would be to impress the Administration at Washington and the whole country with the strength of the revolution, gain public sympathy by showing a fighting spirit, and at the same time revivify the rebels. There was much discussion of this plan; but Mr. Palma finally approved it—though I fear with some misgivings—and we proceeded to carry it into effect.

From a firearms manufacturing company at Bridgeport, Connecticut, we ordered three thousand rifles, three million rounds of ammunition, three twelve-pounder Hotchkiss field-guns and six hundred shells, several tons of dynamite with which to blow up railroad bridges and do other damage, and a lot of machetes, all of which were to be ready for delivery within five days. This was much too large a cargo to be transported in one of the tugs we were compelled to use, to negotiate narrow passages between the reefs and go close inshore where the arms were to be delivered; so the *Laurada*, a one-thousand-ton steamship

which had been running in the West Indian fruit trade, was chartered to carry two-thirds of it to Navassa Island, a guano-covered rock lying south of the eastern end of Cuba and midway between Jamaica and Haiti. She belonged to John D. Hart, the owner of the *Bermuda*, and was lying at Philadelphia ready to sail. I put Ed Murphy, who had been my mate on the *Bermuda*, in command of her.

Horatio Rubens then went to Brunswick, Georgia, and secretly bought the ocean-going tug *Dauntless* from the Brunswick Navigation Company for thirty thousand dollars. He carried the purchase price with him in one-thousand-dollar bills to avoid any delay in completing the deal, which had been decided on before the necessity for quick action arose. The *Dauntless* was nearly new and a splendid sea-boat, and as well suited to our purpose as she was well named. She measured one hundred and twenty-five feet over all and had a powerful wheel that could drive her along at thirteen knots an hour, which was fast enough for all of our ordinary needs.

The *Dauntless* was immediately turned over to Mr. Huau, the delegate at Jacksonville of the provisional government of Cuba, and his assistant, Alphonso W. Fritot, as she was to be despatched from their territory. As a matter of fact, they sacrificed more for the Cuban cause and rendered it more efficient service than did

the delegation in New York, though they were not so much in the limelight. Mr. Huau was never called on for money that he did not respond, and his home was always open to sick or otherwise unfortunate Cubans. Mr. Fritot, who was his nephew, was cast in the same mold. He was born in Cuba of French-American parentage. His father, who had been master mechanic of the Savanilla Railroad at Matanzas, was driven into exile after having been twice imprisoned for his revolutionary tendencies. He died from the effects of his confinement, and the son grew up with a bitter hatred of everything Spanish.

Fritot was the active worker at Jacksonville, and in the ways that were open to him he was the most useful member of the whole revolutionary organization ashore. He was at that time joint agent for all of the railroads running into Jacksonville, and his position made it possible for him to do things of tremendous value which no one else could have done. He had the advantage, too, of living in a hotbed of Cuban sympathizers; it was not safe to speak a kind word for Spain anywhere in Florida. The detectives who were assigned to watch him had many troubles. When he saw a stranger whom he suspected of being a spy hanging around the depot, he would have the special officer at the station arrest him on a charge of vagrancy or on general principles—it made no difference which. The prisoner was

carefully searched at the police station, and his room was also ransacked. If anything was found to indicate that he might be a detective he was convicted of vagrancy without ceremony or delay and sent to the rock pile or the turpentine farm for from thirty to ninety days, without the option of a fine. In aggravated cases conspiracy charges were framed up against the detectives, the proof was promptly produced in abundance, and they were sent away for as long as six months at very hard labor.

If any there be who profess to feel shocked by a frank statement of these methods, let them remember that the Cubans were fighting an enemy that was still living in the dark ages in its principles of governing its colonies; an enemy which resorted unhesitatingly to bribery and murder by the wholesale, and one from whose brutality all Cubans had suffered, directly or indirectly. They were fighting, too, with the fury of desperation in what they believed to be a final effort to achieve their freedom, for they realized that if this revolution was suppressed it would be followed by a policy of extermination so complete that a new generation must come up before the fires of liberty could again be lighted. Though it may seem that Fritot's way of dealing with the men who were sent to spy on him was high-handed and unlawful, he was, in reality, generous with them; for he had but to raise his hand, and any

of the detectives, or all of them, would have been lynched in five minutes. No fear of punishment deterred him from going to this extreme, for public sentiment would have unanimously approved the lynchings. It is supposed that "all is fair in love and war," and, if the Cubans sometimes went beyond the letter of the written law, it can never be truthfully claimed that they were nearly so lawless, so treacherous, or so murderous as the Spaniards.

James Floyd, a Jacksonville pilot who had a master's license, was placed in command of the *Dauntless*, and in a day or two she left Brunswick and proceeded leisurely down the coast to the mouth of the Satilla River, sixty miles north of Jacksonville, ostensibly in search of a wreck. Under her coastwise license she could go anywhere without regard to the Custom-House regulations governing ships bound for foreign ports. Floyd was a negro; but everything about him except his skin was white, and he had a great deal of shrewdness.

As soon as Rubens telegraphed us that the *Dauntless* had been purchased, things began to move rapidly. Two-thirds of the arms were ordered to New York at once; the other third, which filled two cars, was shipped to Jacksonville by express. The *Laurada*, which was reported to be going to Jamaica for fruit, left Philadelphia with instructions to proceed to Barnegat Light, forty miles south of New York,

and await orders. The arms which she was to carry were brought down on the Bridgeport boat and were allowed to remain in the vessel when the rest of the cargo was unloaded. Late in the afternoon, followed as usual by the two detectives, I went to New York and drifted aimlessly around for two or three hours. Soon after dark I was lounging around City Hall Park when a carriage, which I had ordered to meet me at that particular spot at that precise moment, and in which were Dr. Castillo and General Carlos Roloff, secretary of war in the revolutionary government, drove up. I jumped in, and we were driven away before the sleuths had time to think. There was no other disengaged carriage in sight, and before they could find one we were out of sight.

We were driven, at a lively gait and by a roundabout route, to the Bridgeport Line dock; and the big swinging doors were closed and locked as soon as we were inside. There had been no attempt at secrecy in shipping the arms from Bridgeport; but the detectives who had been assigned to keep a sharp eye on them had gone off watch, taking it for granted that they would not be moved at night. After they had left, and just before we arrived, an apparently empty lighter was towed into the slip and tied up on the opposite side of the dock from the steamship with the arms. When the gates had been closed, so no one on the outside could see what

was going on, we began hustling our cargo out of the steamer and across the pier into the lighter, with the aid of a large party of Cubans who had been concealed on the latter craft. At midnight, by which time all of the arms had been transferred, a tug slipped up, quietly made fast to the lighter, and towed it away. I went aboard the tug to direct operations, and we steamed to Barnegat Light to meet the *Laurada*, which had left Philadelphia the previous morning. General Nuñez came out from Atlantic City in a launch and joined us. We met the *Laurada* at the appointed place, well outside of the three-mile limit, and our cargo was put on board of her, along with fifty Cubans who were to assist in landing it. She was ordered to proceed slowly to Navassa Island, where I told Murphy I would meét him in twelve days with the *Dauntless*; and General Nuñez, Dr. Castillo, and I returned to the city on the tug. The empty barge was anchored in the upper bay, and we were landed, late at night, at a deserted dock on the Jersey side of the Hudson. It was not until I got home that I was picked up by the detectives, four of whom were anxiously watching the house. They knew I had not forsaken them for nothing, but they had no idea what I had been up to. When they discovered that we were planning another expedition to Cuba and got on our trail, they were thrown off the scent in a way that was new to them.

VII

HOW FRED FUNSTON WENT TO CUBA

THE day after the good ship *Laurada* left New York with a cargo of arms, of which she was to be relieved by the *Dauntless* at Navassa Island, General Nuñez and I, with two detectives at our heels, started by rail for Charleston, South Carolina, where the *Commodore*, which was owned by the Cubans and had done some filibustering work, was lying, with a revenue cutter standing guard over her. She had no arms aboard, so there was no excuse for seizing her; but the government was determined she should not get away again. Soon after our arrival I sent word to the captain of the *Commodore* to get steam up. This was done to convey the idea to the authorities, who were so excited over the presence of real filibusters that they were ready to believe anything, that we would try to use her. I wanted to make sure that the cutter would stick close alongside of her.

In the mean time Horatio Rubens had left Brunswick, where he had concluded the deal for the purchase of the *Dauntless* so quickly and quietly that no unfriendly eyes had seen him,

and had gone to Jacksonville, where he paraded himself so prominently that the spies were on his track in no time. He consulted openly with Mr. Huau and other active revolutionists, and quickly caused the impressionable sleuths to conclude that an expedition was to be sent out on the tug *Three Friends*, which had made one trip to Cuba for the rebels, and was then lying in the river in front of the city. Hence it followed that the only other revenue cutter which was near enough to the scene of action to give us any trouble was hurriedly summoned to watch the *Three Friends;* this was before our continued success had caused the force of cutters in those waters to be enlarged and augmented with war-ships.

The detectives must have thought we were moving very awkwardly; but they soon knew better. I will say for the Pinkertons, and the famed Secret Service operatives and special Treasury agents, that one could seldom do the same thing twice in the same way, right under their noses, without almost certain detection. That is all I can say in commendation of their shrewdness; and, as, with one exception, I never tried to trick them twice by precisely the same method, their only effectiveness was in compelling us to think up new ideas, which was not difficult.

At Charleston we found General Rafael Cabrera in command of a force of seventy-five Cubans, who were to accompany us; previously

it had been planned to send them away on the *Commodore*, but the scheme had missed fire, and they had been held there under waiting orders. Likewise, we found an army of detectives of all sorts who had been watching Cabrera and his men. There must have been twenty-five of them, and they proceeded to "ride herd" on us in the style taught in all good schools for sleuths. Nothing escaped their vigilance. When I sent the note to the captain of the *Commodore* telling him to get up steam and be prepared to sail on short notice, a Secret Service agent paid my trusted messenger a large sum of government money to let him read the message. As evidence that my confidence in the messenger was not misplaced, he got more money than I told him to demand.

On the day following our arrival we were joined by a small party from New York, headed by Frank Pagluchi, one of our engineers. Pagluchi, who was American born of Italian parents, was a sharp on marine machinery and a good fighter. With him were half a dozen young Americans who were seeking excitement, and perhaps glory, in Cuba. They had been passed by some one connected with the delegation in New York; but nothing else was known about them. One of them was Frederick Funston, whose subsequent campaigning in Cuba helped to make him a brigadier-general in the United States army.

Late in the afternoon of the day they arrived we rounded up our little party and hustled to the Atlantic Coast Line depot (then the Plant Line) just in time to catch a train for Jacksonville, leaving the *Commodore* with smoke pouring from her funnel. We occupied a coach at the rear of the train, which had been reserved for us. The detectives divided their force when they saw us start for the station, and a dozen of them wished to join us as traveling companions; but they were told that ours was a private car, so they were obliged to content themselves with the coach ahead. About ten o'clock that night we reached Callahan, twenty miles north of Jacksonville, where the Seaboard Air Line (then the Florida Central & Peninsular) crosses the Coast Line. As we came to a stop our coach was quietly uncoupled, and when the train pulled out we were left behind. By the time the detectives discovered we were no longer with them they could not jump off without breaking their necks, and the train had orders from the general manager to run through to Jacksonville without stopping for any one.

Before the train was out of sight an engine backed down and coupled up to our car, switched us over to the Seaboard track, and headed for the coast. At a blind siding in the woods some miles east of Callahan we stopped to pick up the two carloads of arms and ammunition which had been shipped from Bridgeport to Jackson-

ville. These cars had been dropped off at Callahan, through a private order from headquarters, and the detectives were still waiting and watching for them in Jacksonville. All of this jugglery in transportation was due to the astute Mr. Fritot, who joined us at Charleston. At Callahan we picked up two Cuban pilots who were supposed to have an intimate acquaintance with the coast at the places where we were to land. We were then in Fritot's territory, and he was responsible for the safe departure of the expedition. The first thing he did was to look the party over carefully, to satisfy himself there were no spies aboard. When he reached Funston he showed some suspicion.

"Who are you?" he sharply inquired.

"Fred Funston."

"Where are you going?"

"To Cuba."

"What for?"

"To fight Spaniards, the same as all of these other men."

"How do you know they are going to fight Spaniards?"

"They told me so in New York, and they told me I might come along."

"Who told you that?"

"Mr. Zayas, the secretary of the Junta."

Funston's answers had the ring of honesty, and the interview might have ended there if a young daredevil named Welsford, who was

sitting beside him, had not sought to help matters along when he saw that Fritot still hesitated.

"We're not only going to fight Spaniards," he said, with offensive braggadocio; "but we're going to kill them. Then we're going to cut off their ears and string them on a line. Before I've been in Cuba a month I expect to have a string that long." And he spread out his arms to their full length.

Fritot studied both men for a long half-minute. "That sounds like spy talk," he told Welsford. "We are not depriving any Spaniards of their ears; but I think we will deprive ourselves of the company of you two gentlemen right here."

He reached for the bell-cord to stop the train; but paused before giving the signal to discuss the situation with some of the Cuban leaders. After an earnest exchange of opinions it was decided to allow the two Americans to accompany the expedition; but they were to be closely watched, and if it developed, after the landing, that they really were spies, they were to be shot without further ceremony. Formal and strict instructions to this effect were given to General Cabrera, who was admonished to keep the two men under his own observation and see that they did not give him the slip before we sailed, if such was their intention.

"We will see that you get to Cuba, all right,"

Fritot assured Funston and Welsford, after their case had been disposed of, "and if you are looking for a fight you'll get all you want of it. If you are spies you will do less harm down there than up here."

Before we reached our destination Fritot found time for several short talks with Funston and his boastful companion, in which he sought to draw them out. Funston spoke of several meetings with Zayas, and told of how, along with a number of Cubans, he had studied the handling of a Hotchkiss gun for three or four weeks in a room over a Third Avenue saloon in New York. His evident sincerity half convinced Fritot that he and his friend were all right.

The next time I saw Funston, which was during the second American intervention in Cuba, he was a brigadier-general in the United States army. I have sometimes wondered what his future would have been if he had been put off the train that night in the woods.

While it was still dark we reached Woodbine, a lonely station at the crossing of the Satilla River. The *Dauntless*, under a full head of steam, was lying at a landing a few steps below the railroad bridge, which crossed the stream close to its mouth, and the arms and ammunition were quickly placed on board of her; part of the cargo was loaded right onto her deck from the cars as they stood on the bridge. At daylight another tug, the *Inca*, came alongside with

an extra supply of coal, which was crammed into our bunkers and piled on deck; and before the sun was far up we were off for Cuba, with never a sign of interference. When our departure became known, the Spanish government entered a scorching protest at Washington. The special Treasury agent in charge of the horde of supposedly shrewd men who had been assigned to prevent us from getting away stated, in his official report of the affair, that "the expedition had been so artistically handled that detection was impossible." He had, he said, every reason to believe we would attempt to start from Charleston or Jacksonville, and both of these ports were guarded by revenue cutters.

We left Satilla River on August 14th, and three days later General Cabrera and his men and the cargo were put ashore close to Point Arenal, twelve miles east of Nuevitas. In making this landing our experience with the previous expedition was repeated, when it developed that at least one of our volunteer pilots was a traitor. He tried to run the *Dauntless* on a reef, and if I had not been keeping a sharp lookout, partly as a result of what I had seen of Cuban pilots on the *Bermuda*, he would have piled us up high and dry. I saw there was no water where he was heading for, and I was not a second too soon in signaling the alert Pagluchi to go full speed astern. Just as the tug lost way her bow struck the reef and stuck fast; but by getting all

hands aft we managed to back her off. As in the previous instance, the perfidious pilot was killed by the Cubans the moment he landed, and his partner narrowly escaped the same fate. No native pilot ever accompanied me on an expedition after that; I preferred to take chances on finding my own way into strange places rather than run the risk of repeated treachery.

The coast was clear when we made out the landing-place; so we went close inshore before dark and began to unload, though it was an extremely dangerous place, for there was no cover of any kind. Between nine and ten o'clock, while we were getting the rifles ashore, a Spanish gunboat, all lit up like an excursion steamer, hove in sight around a point seven miles to the eastward. We were not showing any sort of a light, but it was certain that if we stayed where we were she would see us as she went by, hugging the shore, so we had to get out in a hurry. The situation was such that we had to take a course parallel with hers for several miles before we could get far enough ahead to cross her bow without being seen. Then I hauled out to sea and watched her go grandly by. We stood eight miles offshore until daylight and then went back in and finished the unloading.

"You've got a lot of cheek," said Funston, who had stayed on board to help get the cargo into the landing-dories, when I started back for the shore.

"You've got to have cheek to succeed in this business," I told him.

Two hours after we had cleared away another gunboat showed up from the westward; but its officers must have been sound asleep, for they detected none of the evidences of the landing which had just been made. It took three days to get the field-gun and all of the arms back into the bush, but no part of them was lost. The cartridges were packed in fifty-pound boxes, lined with tin and sealed, so they could be dumped out in shallow water and taken ashore when it was convenient.

From Nuevitas we went to Navassa Island to meet the *Laurada*, arriving there thirty-six hours ahead of time. She showed up exactly at the appointed time and anchored close to the rock. We took off half of her party of Cubans and half of her cargo, which we landed in broad daylight on the afternoon of Saturday, August 22d, at Santa de Argo Niaco, a little cove twelve miles west of Santiago. There were several war-ships at Santiago, and the city was full of Spanish troops; but I had discovered that the gunboats which patrolled the coast made a practice of running into some large port about noon on Saturday and lying there until Monday morning. During this unwatched interval it was reasonably safe to make a landing at almost any place that was not in plain sight of some Spanish blockhouse or watch-station. We re-

turned at once to the *Laurada* and took on the rest of the cargo, which was landed at the same place early on Monday morning. General Roloff, who had come down on the *Laurada*, accompanied us when we made both of these landings; but, though in New York he had expressed a desire to get to Cuba and take the field, he decided not to go ashore.

Thus it turned out that in three days less than a month from the day Mr. Cleveland sounded the warning which put us on our mettle the entire expedition had been landed in Cuba, without the injury of a man or the loss of a cartridge, and the *Dauntless* had paid for herself. The landing of three cargoes by the same ship within a week gave the authorities something to think about in both Washington and Madrid. What was more important, it showed the American people that the war in Cuba was a real, red-blooded rebellion, and not merely an outburst of oratory. The *Dauntless* behaved in a way that showed hearty sympathy with our work, and I was in love with her.

The crew of the *Laurada* included a number of Jamaica negroes, whom we distrusted; so when we took off her cargo we were careful to have tarpaulins carelessly thrown over the stern and out of the windows of the pilot-house so that the name of the *Dauntless* could not be seen. This precaution counted for nothing, for we did not then know the extent to which a Jamaica

negro will gladly perjure himself for a sufficient consideration.

With the landing of our last cargo the *Laurada* went to Jamaica to load fruit for Charleston, and the *Dauntless* headed up for Key West. She steamed up north of the city, and Nuñez, Roloff, and I rowed ashore in a small boat, while the tug went on to Jacksonville; we knew she would be seized, and we wanted the trial held in a friendly port. Nuñez, Roloff, and I drifted into Key West after dark and went to the home of a rich Cuban, where we were secreted until I had partly recovered from a fever brought on by having been on the bridge continuously for a week, when we went on to Jacksonville.

When the *Laurada* reached Charleston with her load of fruit the detectives got hold of the six Jamaicans who were in her crew, and, in return for their evidence, agreed to pay them seventeen dollars a week until the case was disposed of. General Nuñez, John D. Hart, owner of the *Laurada*, and Ed Murphy, her commander, were indicted for filibustering. Hart was tried in Philadelphia before Judge Butler, the man who hated filibusters, and convicted. He was sentenced to sixteen months in the penitentiary, and eventually served four months before a pardon could be secured for him. Of all of the men who engaged in filibustering during the Cuban revolution, Hart was the only one who was convicted, and his only offense consisted of owning two

ships that were used and employing me to take command of the *Bermuda*.

Nuñez and Murphy were tried in New York, with Horatio Rubens to defend them, and got off without much trouble. The Jamaica negroes told their story, which was damaging enough so long as they stuck close to the truth; but one of them, who was especially anxious to earn his pay, went farther than the rest. He swore that he had read "Dynamite" and "Fuses" on boxes which the *Laurada* carried, and that he had seen "*Dauntless*, Brunswick, Georgia," on the tug that took off her cargo. Rubens made him repeat these statements on cross-examination, and then asked him to spell "Dynamite." It developed that the negro could not read or write, and a verdict of acquittal followed.

The *Dauntless* was seized as soon as she poked her nose into Jacksonville, and the authorities undertook to confiscate her, on the ground that she had gone to a foreign port—meaning Navassa Island, for they could not prove she had gone to Cuba—on a coastwise license. Rubens exploded this theory by producing the Revised Statutes, which, much to the surprise of the government's lawyers, gave the United States jurisdiction over Navassa Island. Then the government determined to indict me; and, as I chose to remain in Jacksonville, where the climate at that particular time was most congenial,

the Jamaica negroes were taken there to testify before the Federal grand jury. When the train on which the Jamaicans were traveling reached Callahan, a crowd of enthusiastic Americans insisted on taking them off and lynching them. Fortunately for the benighted blacks, Rubens happened to be on the same train, and he persuaded the would-be lynchers to abandon their plan, but not until after he had argued with them more earnestly than he ever had to plead with a jury to secure an acquittal.

The negroes identified me easily enough and told all they knew, but the jury unanimously refused to vote an indictment. Negro testimony didn't count for much in Jacksonville, and anti-Cuban testimony, no matter what the color of the witnesses, didn't count for anything at all. After his dismissal in New York, Nuñez was taken to Jacksonville and tried again for filibustering, this time with reference to the *Dauntless*, and again acquitted. This left the government with no legal ground for holding the *Dauntless*, and she was released.

With all of these little annoyances removed, we turned our minds to the shipment of more "aid and comfort" to Cuba. The next expedition was noteworthy from the fact that it included one of the recently invented Sims-Dudley dynamite-guns. My recollection is that this unique weapon, which had been tried out on Long Island some weeks before, was the first

one that had been disposed of, and I am quite sure it was the first one used in war. In theory it was expected to blow up everything within range and terrorize the Spaniards; in its practical operation it did considerable execution, but it was proved that it was valuable chiefly for its moral effect on the enemy and the wholesale destruction which its name suggested. The fact that it necessarily was discharged with compressed air limited its radius of action; and sometimes its nitrogelatin shells, which were set off by detonators as well as by concussion, failed to explode. In appearance it resembled a mammoth double-barreled shot-gun on wheels, with one barrel, which constituted the air-chamber, shorter than the other. The gun was in charge of an American named Fredericks, who had lived in Cuba, and had acquired considerable experience with dynamite from setting off mines during the early part of the war.

This much-talked-about weapon and one thousand rifles, half a million rounds of ammunition, machetes, medicines, and several tons of dynamite were shipped on a Clyde liner from New York to Jacksonville, where they were transferred to two express cars without any attempt at concealment. A day or two before they arrived there, General Miguel Betancourt, a veteran of the Ten Years' War, who was to command the landing party; General Freyre Andrade —afterward a member of President Palma's

cabinet, and more recently speaker of the house in the Cuban congress, of which he was one of the dominant figures—who was to accompany him; General Nuñez; Dr. Castillo; Cartaya, and I started south from New York. We were trailed by a dozen detectives, and for their benefit we first went to Savannah, as though trying to dodge them, and then to Charleston, where we repeated the bluff of using the *Commodore*, which was still lying in the harbor under guard of a revenue cutter.

While the sleuths had their eyes glued on the *Commodore*, which was getting steam up and sending black smoke streaming out of her stack in a way that would have been criminally careless under other conditions, we slipped away to Jacksonville, where Fritot had made arrangements for us to continue our journey in style. The private car of Mr. J. R. Parrott, vice-president and general manager of the Florida East Coast Railway, had been placed at our disposal, with an engine, and the special train was waiting for us. Mr. Parrott was unable to accompany us; but he sent his general superintendent, Mr. R. T. Goff, to make it appear that a few of his friends were going down the line on an inspection trip. Fredericks rode with us; but it was not long until several members of the party wished it had been possible for him to make the trip by some other route. He carried a shabby old valise to which none of us had pre-

viously paid any attention; but it seemed so much out of place in the handsomely appointed private car that every one took a good-natured kick at it. Fredericks laughed so loudly as he saw it being knocked around that some one asked him what it contained.

"Nothing but fulminate-of-mercury detonators," he replied.

"What are they for?"

"To set off the shells from the big gun."

"Are they more explosive than dynamite?"

"Only ten or twenty times as much so."

This startling information put the laugh on us, much to the enjoyment of the diabolical Fredericks; and the first man who regained the use of his legs tenderly deposited the reverently respected gripsack in a state-room and locked the door. It seemed a miracle that fulminate of mercury could be subjected to such brutality without exploding, and there was enough of it in the valise to have blown all of us to bits.

The fact that we ran as a special, and that the train as it left Jacksonville consisted only of the engine and Mr. Parrott's car, prevented any inquisitive persons from surreptitiously accompanying us; and there was no train on which they could follow us until the next day. A short distance below the city we picked up the two car-loads of arms and ammunition, which had been run down and placed on an obscure side-track; and at New Smyrna we added two day

coaches containing seventy-five Cubans, who had been brought over from Tampa on a special train. At Palm Beach, which was deserted at that time of the year, the train was run out on the Florida East Coast dock alongside of the *Dauntless*, which was waiting for us. It was an easy matter to get the cargo aboard of her, and she was steaming toward Cuba in a few hours. Nuñez and I were barred from accompanying her by a ruse of the Spanish minister at Washington, who, having become suspicious that another expedition was under way, had the filibustering charge against us, growing out of our trip with the *Bermuda*, moved up on the docket and set for trial within a few days. Consequently Dr. Castillo took charge of the expedition, and Captain W. H. Lewis, of the *Three Friends*, went in command of the *Dauntless*.

The expedition was landed on the night of October 26th, at the mouth of the San Juan River, fifteen miles east of Cienfuegos. While it was being unloaded a little Spanish gunboat went by close inshore; but she failed to notice the *Dauntless*. General Betancourt was so slow in getting the arms back into the bush that a large part of them were lost. They were left lying around on the beach for four days, with the natural result that they were discovered by a passing war-ship and captured. The dynamite-gun was saved, largely through the energy of the untamed Fredericks; but half of the rifles

and cartridges fell into the hands of the enemy. General Gomez was so enraged by this unnecessary loss of arms, which were badly needed, that he threatened to have General Betancourt shot, and probably would have done so but for his good record in the previous revolution. Betancourt subsequently committed suicide, and it was believed that his self-destruction was due, in some degree, to worry and remorse over this incident.

After having seen the *Dauntless* safely away General Nuñez and I returned to New York to stand trial for the *Bermuda* business; but when our case was called the government secured a continuance, on the ground that it was not ready to proceed. The fact was that there was no intention of trying it at that time; the Spanish minister had thought that by holding Nuñez and me in this country he could block any offensive movement we might be planning; but he did not then appreciate the excellence of our organization. Our case was never allowed to go to trial; and, after vainly holding the indictment over our heads as a club, it finally was dismissed in the summer of 1898.

VIII

MIKE WALSH DRAWS BLOOD

THREE cargoes of arms and ammunition landed in Cuba by the *Dauntless* within a week, followed by another one two months later; and the government's inability to convict any of those who played an active part in the expeditions set the Washington authorities by the ears. President Cleveland was thoroughly angry over the way in which his neutrality proclamation had been defied; and, by his direction, peremptory commands were issued which he believed would assuredly put an end to filibustering. The Spanish government, which had been complaining bitterly of our freedom of action, was advised of these additional precautions, and the chiefs of both capitals took fresh hope that there would be no further straining of their diplomatic relations.

Increased activity by the Revenue Cutter Service was ordered, and the Navy Department was called on for assistance; the latter we regarded as a great compliment, even though it added to the difficulties we were obliged to overcome. The dynamite-cruiser *Vesuvius*, under

Lieutenant-Commander John E. Pillsbury, was stationed at Jacksonville to prevent any more expeditions from leaving that port. She remained there, off the Market Street wharf, for more than a year, and Mr. Pillsbury and Lieutenant John E. Quinby, the executive officer, did all they had to do; if anything escaped them it was because, making no pretense at mind-reading, they could not always tell what was about to happen. The fast cruisers *Marblehead* and *Raleigh* and the light-draft gunboat *Marietta* were assigned to patrol the coast from Key West to Jacksonville. In addition, half a dozen revenue cutters were directed to watch the ports north of Jacksonville and cruise along the coast. The authorities were confident that a barrier had been established which it would be impossible for us to break through. On shore the force of detectives was largely increased, and all customs officers were cautioned against slumber when any suspected filibusters were in sight.

This activity against the Cubans produced one particularly amusing incident. Early in November, 1896, Mr. Rubens heard that Donald McNeill, a machine and engine builder of Brooklyn, who was on my bond for $5,000 on the old filibustering charge resulting from the *Bermuda* expedition, was getting nervous; so he advised me to disappear for a few days until he could find some one else to furnish security

for me. The *Holyrood*, a British tramp steamer, was just then in need of a pilot to Boston, and I took the job. Before we had made fast to the dock in Boston the vessel was surrounded by detectives, Secret Service operatives, special Treasury agents, deputy United States marshals, customs officers, and Spanish spies by the dozen. The enraged captain and his mates actually kicked them off the ship until they were exhausted. The funny part of it was that the *Holyrood* was actually bound for Cuba with a perfectly legitimate cargo, for which she went to Boston; but no power on earth could get the idea out of the wise heads of the detectives that she was to be loaded chiefly with munitions of war. They were the most inquisitive and persistent bloodhounds—with apologies to all four-legged bloodhounds—I had ever seen, for they were positive they had, at last, made a real discovery. I enjoyed the joke until the captain could no longer kick hard enough to make a detective howl. Then I returned to New York, where I was met with the cheering news that my bondsman had no fear that I would run away.

I then went to Jacksonville to arrange to get another expedition away, for the Cubans were calling for more arms. General Weyler, who had succeeded the comparatively gentle Martinez Campos as Captain-General, was building his famous *trocha* across the narrowest part of the

island, from Mariel to Majava, to pen up General Maceo in Pinar del Rio; and the Cubans were exerting themselves to make his position as uncomfortable as they had made that of his predecessor. The first thing I did was to establish a coaling-station on Indian Key, a little island inhabited by only a few wreckers, forty miles east of Key West, so that if we were caught out on a long trip we would not be compelled to put in at some guarded port to replenish our bunkers. Soon afterward I heard that Spanish spies had playfully mixed a lot of dynamite with the ship-load of coal that had been sent down there, so none of it was ever used.

The *Dauntless*, having more than paid for herself with the four landings she had made, had been sold to a Jacksonville syndicate composed of W. A. Bisbee, George R. Foster, Jr., and A. W. Fritot, and was being used as a towboat between Jacksonville and the bar at the mouth of the St. Johns River. The Cubans reserved first call on her, and were to pay much less than the regular price for her services, for her owners did not expect to profit from her operations as a filibuster. Under the standard scale, tugboat owners were paid $10,000 for each expedition that was sent out, regardless of its delivery; the money was paid as soon as the ship cleared. The owners of the *Three Friends*—Napoleon B. and Montcalm Broward, and George A. DeCottes—were paid $12,000 for her first trip;

but after that the price was reduced to $10,000. The crew got double pay while they were out, and from $500 to $1,000 was distributed among them after each trip.

By devoting the *Dauntless* to lawful navigation for the greater part of the time, she acquired a mixed reputation, in place of one entirely bad, and the authorities were confused. It never would have done for us to use one ship all of the time. The *Three Friends* was also towing between Jacksonville and the bar when I reached the city. Both vessels were closely watched by the *Vesuvius;* but unless there was something suspicious in their movements or in the general situation, the war-ship did not follow them up and down the river on their routine trips. My presence soon started some talk that we were planning another violation of the neutrality law; but I pretended to be sick, and was not much in evidence. The unfailing Fritot, for whose genius for deception I had come to have great admiration, and I were working together, and our tracks were so faint that no one seemed able to follow them.

The clever detectives decided that, if there really was anything doing, we would use the *Dauntless*, on account of her record of unvarying success; so we naturally selected the *Three Friends*. George L. Baltzell, collector of customs at Fernandina, twenty-five miles up the coast, who was the most faithful kind of a pub-

lic servant and one of the few men in Florida who were not active sympathizers with the Cubans, had been indulging in much loud talk about filibustering.

"They are sending expeditions out of Jacksonville whenever they want to," he frequently declared; "but I would like to see them try to get one out of Fernandina, by gosh! I'll nail 'em to the cross in a holy minute if they start anything here."

Fernandina was as good a place as we knew of to start from, so we concluded to accommodate the explosive Mr. Baltzell. When our plans were completed we telegraphed Mr. Palma, and two car-loads of revolutionary equipment, including one Hotchkiss twelve-pounder, one thousand rifles, and five hundred thousand cartridges, and a lot of small arms, dynamite, and machetes, were expressed to Jacksonville. They were intercepted, in the Fritot fashion, at a siding north of Callahan, and their contents were transferred to other cars. The two cars which had started from the firearms factory, and of which the sleepless sleuths had the lines and numbers, empty but sealed, were run on into Jacksonville, where the waiting detectives proceeded to guard them day and night. The two cars which carried the arms were switched off at Callahan and run over to Yulee, between Jacksonville and Fernandina, where they patiently waited for some one to claim them.

General Rafael Perez Morales, who had lost an eye in the Ten Years' War, was to command the landing party. He was summoned from New York, and the fifty men who were to go with him were selected in Jacksonville. Between two and three hundred Cubans who were anxious to go home and engage in the war were constantly held at Jacksonville and Tampa under waiting orders. They were allowed five dollars a week to cover their living expenses, and were ready to sail at a moment's notice. Colonel Carbo came down from New York with Morales to accompany the expedition as the representative of Mr. Palma.

It was arranged that the expedition should leave on a Sunday night. The one thing of which our friend Mr. Baltzell was especially fond was draw-poker. One Sunday afternoon Napoleon Broward, one of the owners of the *Three Friends,* and afterward governor of Florida, happened to be in Fernandina; and, as he could not leave until the next day, he had no trouble in fixing up a poker game for that evening, at which Mr. Baltzell was to sit in. At about the same time that this pleasant little affair was arranged the *Three Friends* left Jacksonville with a schooner in tow. She reached the bar late in the afternoon, and, after casting off the schooner, stood up the coast, apparently in search of another tow. Soon after dark General Morales and his men, one and two at a time,

slipped unnoticed into two unlighted passenger-coaches which were standing on a dark side-track at the old F. C. & P. depot at the foot of Julia Street, which was not more than one hundred yards from Mr. Fritot's city office. Promptly at nine o'clock an engine coupled onto the apparently "dead" coaches and took them around the city on the belt line.

Fritot spent the afternoon at his office going over a lot of correspondence, with as much attention as though he had nothing but railroad affairs on his mind. He was given a shock about five o'clock, when he received a call from Mr. Portuse, the Spanish consul at Jacksonville. His first impression was that Portuse had discovered what we were doing and had come in to laugh at him; but the Spaniard was entirely innocent, and had dropped in merely for idle conversation, with the hope that he might see or hear something of interest. Fritot good-naturedly put aside his work and walked uptown with Portuse as far as the latter's home. Then he paid a friendly visit to the *Vesuvius*, to see what was going on there. He found shore-leave had been granted to a number of the crew, and everything was serene and unsuspicious. Mr. Quinby, the executive officer, and Frank W. Bartlett, the chief engineer, came ashore with Fritot and accompanied him to the Jacksonville Club, where they had several drinks together. Then Fritot, who had been watching

the clock, started for "home"; but instead of going there he jumped on his bicycle and rode out to a crossing north of the city, where, having eluded the detectives who were supposed to shadow me, I met him. In a few minutes the special train with General Morales and his party came along and stopped for us. We boarded it and proceeded to Fernandina, stopping at Yulee to pick up the two freight-cars loaded with arms.

On our arrival at Fernandina an unobtrusive signal told us the poker game was in full swing and there was nothing for us to worry about. The special train was run out on a dock to which the *Three Friends* had quietly tied up an hour before. The cargo was transferred to her without any unnecessary noise or delay, and at daylight we were out of sight of the town. Mr. Baltzell raised a great ruction when he discovered that an expedition had been despatched from the bailiwick of which he had done so much boasting; but it was too late then for anything save bitter regrets, with which he was well supplied.

Our destination was the San Juan River, east of Cienfuegos, where the *Dauntless* had landed her last cargo, much of which, on account of the delay in getting it away from the beach, had fallen into the hands of the Spaniards. The loss of these arms had interfered with the operations of General Gomez, who was scattering death and destruction through Santa Clara province, and he wanted others in place of them. However

much he was in need of supplies, it was a great mistake to send them to San Juan. If I had been with the *Dauntless* on the previous expedition I never would have consented to go there again, for it was an extremely bad place to make a landing, not so much on account of its proximity to Cienfuegos, where there was a large garrison and usually one or two war-ships, as on account of the shallow water. There was a narrow channel running out from the mouth of the river with dangerous shoals on both sides of it for eight or ten miles, which made it a difficult place to get into, and a much more difficult one to get away from in a hurry.

We made bad weather of it almost from the time we left Fernandina, and were forced to lay to for all of one night inside of Sombrero Light, between Bahia Honda and Knight's Key. We were off Cienfuegos on the morning of December 19th, and laid there all day, fifteen miles out, so as to be safe from observation from the shore. As soon as it was dark we steamed at full speed for the mouth of the river. When we were within two miles of the shore a Spanish gunboat came sneaking slowly out of the river. To my surprise she was showing no lights. Pagluchi picked her up first. I stopped the engines until I made out her smoke; then it was "Hard-a-port and full speed to sea!" Colonel Carbo and some of the other Cubans who lacked sharp eyes had not seen the Spaniard and were skeptical.

"You are running away from a shadow," said Carbo, throwing out his chest.

"Do you think so?" I inquired, with some sarcasm. "We'll wait and see."

I jerked the bell with a stop signal; but before we had lost way the gunboat banged away at us with a one-pound shell, which splashed not far ahead of us.

"That's what you might call an animated shadow," I suggested to the subdued Carbo, as I hooked her up again at full speed, without the faintest sign of an objection from any one. A moment later I made out two more gunboats, six or seven miles away, coming up from the east and west to head us off. Their appearance made it plain that there had, for once, been treachery in our camp. Some one who knew where we were bound for had communicated with the enemy, and the trap had been nicely set for us.

Seeing the fix we were in, I ordered the Hotchkiss twelve-pounder, which was lying boxed up on the forward deck, into immediate service; all of the deck aft, where it could have been used to much better advantage, was taken up with the dories in which the cargo was to be landed. There were several adventurous Americans on board, and among them was a praiseworthy person named Mike Walsh, who had been a gunner in the United States navy. When Mike learned that the big box contained a brand-new gun, he stepped up and offered his services.

"If you'll let me handle it," he said, "I'll guarantee to produce a whole lot of Spanish stomach-ache with its pills."

"Shoot it as often as you like and as fast as you know how," I told him.

"Glory be!" shouted Mike. He shook his fist at the Spaniards and yelled at them the command: "Prepare for burials at sea."

Pagluchi and Walsh superintended the setting-up of the gun, with the mechanism of which they were familiar, and made quick work of it. They were ably assisted by Ralph D. Paine and two other newspaper correspondents, who, because of their sympathy with the revolution, had been taken along to see just how our expeditions were conducted. They stood their initiation splendidly; but they agreed later that it furnished all of the excitement they were looking for.

One incident, as unexpected as the meeting with a small section of the Spanish navy, gave them a further insight into the delightful dangers of filibustering. While the gun was being set up Pagluchi told one of his assistants to get out some of the shells, which were packed in boxes about the size and shape of those containing dynamite. The fellow picked out one of the ammunition-boxes, as he supposed, and roughly broke it open with an ax. When it flew apart, after he had struck it several hard blows, two or three dozen sticks of dynamite rolled out on

the deck. That was one of the times when Providence was kind to us. As a rule, boxes of high explosives, even when their contents are frozen and comparatively safe to handle, are not opened with an ax. The dynamite was gathered up and thrown into the sea, and a more careful man was assigned to get out the Hotchkiss shells.

I had thought we could run away from the gunboat astern of us without much trouble; but I soon saw that she was rapidly gaining on us. It developed that our boilers were so badly fouled with grease and salt that they could not make steam enough to send us along at more than eight or nine knots an hour, when we should have been doing half as much again. John Dunn, the regular engineer of the *Three Friends*, was regarded as a competent man; and Pagluchi had made the mistake of accepting his statement as to the condition of the machinery instead of making his own investigation.

When the pursuing gunboat got within a little more than a mile of us she opened a savage fire with her one-pounders; Spanish gunnery was notoriously bad, and hers was no better than the average; but she was literally hailing shells at us, and some of them came uncomfortably close. In a few seconds I found myself alone in the pilot-house, the two Florida "crackers" who, on account of some local reputation for bravery, had been engaged as helmsmen, having

taken to cover on the run, along with most of the others. Some of the Cubans were out on the stern peppering the Spaniard with an animated rifle fire; but they might as well have saved the ammunition for all the good it did.

Boxes of dynamite, and companion boxes filled with the much more dangerous fulminate-of-mercury detonators, with which the explosive was to be set off under Spanish troop-trains and in other favorable places, were piled up everywhere about the little ship. With only our boilers below deck it needed but one well-placed shot to produce an explosion that would leave nothing but a big hole in the water, or disable the machinery and place us at the mercy of our surrounding enemies, which, for some of us at least, would amount to the same thing as destruction by dynamite. If Mike Walsh and his gun failed us, there was but one thing to do; that was to turn quickly and ram the gunboat amidships. The *Three Friends* was a stoutly built craft, and I figured that we would go half-way through the Spaniard and send him to the bottom by the run. If we were lucky we could back out of the wreckage, run the *Three Friends* on the beach before the other gunboats could reach us, and join General Gomez, who was not far away. There was no thought of surrender, for we knew perfectly well what that would mean.

The Spaniard was not more than half a mile astern, and I had about determined to turn and

slam into him when a shout from Pagluchi told me the gun was ready. It was trained between the deck-house and the shrouds, so the tug had to be swung around three or four points to get it to bear. I put the helm hard over to starboard by climbing up on the wheel, which should have been handled by two strong men instead of one little Irishman, and waited for the report. As we altered our course I was exposed to the full force of the Spanish fire. Rifle bullets sang right merrily through the pilot-house; but not one of them so much as grazed me, though they chipped the wheel and stanchions.

I had expected to hear the roar of the gun as soon as it bore on our enthusiastic pursuer; but in place of it a lot of vigorous profanity floated up from the deck, which told me something had gone wrong with its mechanism. Without waiting for the particulars I climbed up on the wheel again and straightened her out. By that time the other war-ships were only a short distance ahead of us and close together at the end of the channel, and it began to really look ticklish. In less than a minute, while I was rapidly calculating the chances of escape after we had rammed the gunboat astern, Walsh sang out that everything was all right.

Using what seemed to be the last of my strength, I climbed up the spokes of the wheel a third time. As we swung around the gun roared. At the time it appeared to me that it

had been fired too soon, and I feared it had gone wide of the mark; but I was mistaken. Though Mike Walsh spent a thousand years in the navy and fired a gun for eight hours a day, he never would make a prettier shot than that one. The shell struck the Spaniard right in the center of his deck-house and exploded with terrific force. The pilot-house was torn away, putting the steering-gear out of commission, and the whole forward part of the ship was wrecked. Precisely how much damage was done we never knew. The Spaniards denied that there had been any loss of life, but the confidential report which we received a few weeks later, through one of our "underground" routes, stated that thirteen men had been killed outright and a dozen others more or less seriously injured. At any rate, the explosion of the shell was followed by a lot of screaming, and, from what we could see as to its effect, I judge that our secret report gave the correct version of the affair.

The Spaniard immediately ran up a red light, as a signal that he needed help, and the other gunboats went to his assistance, which left us a clear field, and we did no dallying over our departure. The last we saw of the Spaniards the two uninjured war-ships were standing by the one we had crippled, and small boats were passing between them. If we had been called on to fire another shot, it would have taken us some time to do it, for the recoil of the gun

had torn loose the lashings with which it was made fast to the deck, and kicked it almost through the bulwarks. It was a lucky chance that it did not go overboard. When we looked the *Three Friends* over the next morning, we found evidences of Spanish bullets everywhere; but none of them had done any serious damage. The Spaniards are about the only people on earth who could have failed to sink us that night.

With the best speed we could make we proceeded to No Name Key, north of Knight's Key, where we landed the cargo and General Morales and his party on Christmas Day. We left enough provisions to last them a week, and the *Three Friends* went on to Jacksonville, while Colonel Carbo and I chartered a small schooner to take us to Key West. From there we went to Tampa on the *Olivette*, and slipped into Jacksonville, where we met General Nuñez. We got away on the *Dauntless* as soon as we could sneak her out of the harbor, and picked up the expedition on New-Year's Day, 1897.

The reloading of the cargo was delayed by a surprising interruption, which, while it had an amusing side as viewed in the light of history, seemed tragic at the time, for it threatened another and more serious disaster. On account of her draft the *Dauntless* was obliged to lay three or four miles offshore. The patrolling cruisers and revenue cutters that were looking for us

made it necessary to get the stuff aboard as quickly as possible; so, in addition to the dories in which it had been landed, we engaged ten little schooners and sloops, belonging to friendly "konks," or wreckers, living on the adjacent keys, to bring it out to us. Just as we were getting things well started Ralph Paine, who had arranged to rejoin the expedition, came tearing up from Key West, where Carbo and I had left him, in the *Vamoose*, a fast steam-yacht belonging to his employer, William R. Hearst, who was then beginning to cut a newspaper swath in New York. The "konks" took the strange white craft to be either a revenue cutter or a torpedo boat, and the moment they made her out they scurried in all directions, taking our arms with them. Two boat-loads of Cubans, who were just leaving the shore, put back in a hurry and lost themselves in the bush. Nuñez was so angry I feared he would explode before he relieved himself with as fine a burst of impassioned oratory as any one could wish to hear.

Paine, seeing the unintentional havoc he had wrought, tried to follow the fleeing flotilla to explain things, but that only made matters worse; the "konks" thought he wanted to capture them and ran in among the shoals where the yacht could not go. After the *Vamoose* had departed, leaving with us the dejected but determined Paine, who proposed to see that cargo landed if it took all winter, I made the runaways under-

stand, by means of the whistle, that there was no cause for alarm, and they warily returned; but we had lost several valuable hours, and it was dark before we got the last of the arms aboard. A southeaster was kicking up a nasty sea, and Nuñez wanted to stay in the lee of the island until next day; but I knew if we remained there the *Marblehead* or *McCullough* would be down on us at daylight, so we went out into the gale. We passed Key West at sunrise, eight miles out. They must have seen and recognized us from the naval station, but they knew they could not catch us and did not care to try. We ran on around Cape San Antonio, at the west end of Cuba; and on the morning of January 3d put the cargo and party ashore in Corrientes Bay, just inside of Cape Corrientes.

This final performance was more like a Fourth-of-July celebration than the secretive landing of a filibustering expedition. As we came to an anchor I intended to give one short blast of the whistle to summon some of Maceo's troops, who were waiting for us near the cape; but something went wrong with the siren, and it boomed its loudest for a full five minutes before we could shut it off. The *Dauntless* had a siren that would have done credit to an ocean liner, and if there were any Spanish troops or a gunboat within ten miles of us they ought to have heard it. Our nerves had hardly recovered from this shock when a careless Cuban dropped

a box of dynamite on a coral reef and it exploded with a roar that started the echoes to going again. Fortunately, the man with the slippery fingers was far enough away from the rest of the party so that no one else was killed. The only man who was not annoyed by all of this unseemly racket was the Honorable Michael Walsh. He hailed the disturbance with hearty approval, as a possible promise of trouble.

"Let 'em come," he shouted, when it was suggested that the Spaniards might be down on us at any minute. "I came down here looking for scraps, and the more of 'em the better. We had one good little one with that durned gunboat, but another one is due."

We sent the Hotchkiss gun ashore first, and Mike set it up on the beach. Then he looked anxiously around for human targets, and showed keen disappointment when none appeared. Not many weeks afterward we heard that Mike had blown up a troop-train in Pinar del Rio, and other reports of his activity reached us from time to time. For some unknown reason he drifted back to Florida before the end of the war, and was murdered there; by a Spanish spy, as I have always believed.

Señor Dupuy de Lome, the Spanish minister at Washington, was greatly agitated over the one little shot we fired at his gunboat, and he demanded that every one who was on board of the *Three Friends* be prosecuted for piracy.

Technically, that may have been what it amounted to, for the United States had denied the Cubans belligerent rights, but morally it was a very different matter. When we got back to Jacksonville we found the despatch-boat *Dolphin*, which had been added to the protective force in our absence, and the revenue cutter *Boutwell* watching for us off the mouth of the river. We were all hauled into court and solemnly informed that we were under arrest. The grand jury investigated the case with great care, but decided, by the usual unanimous vote, that there was not sufficient evidence to justify any indictments. Plainly stated, there was no chance of convicting us save out of our own mouths, and there was not a man aboard the *Three Friends* whom the government could induce to talk either by threats or promises. Even the distracted Dons aboard the gunboat we fired on could not have sworn that the shot came from the *Three Friends*. The most they could have testified to was that the shot was fired from a ship which closely resembled the *Three Friends;* but all tugboats look alike on a dark night. Therefore the friendly grand jury merely saved all hands the expense and bother of a trial that would have been only a farce.

IX

WHEN OTHER MEANS FAIL

MY success as a filibuster resulted in numerous attempts to bribe me to betray the Cubans. These propositions, which came to me in many different ways, were all inspired by the Spanish government; but the only one that was distinctly official was made soon after the landing of the expedition at Cape Corrientes. Possibly it was attributable to the little affair off the San Juan River and a fear that we might fall into the habit of shooting up Spanish gunboats; it might have been suspected that the masterly marksmanship of Mr. Michael Walsh, as compared with their own marvelously misdirected gunnery, had made a deep and lasting impression on the Dons.

One afternoon in January, 1897, at my home in Arlington, New Jersey, while I was finding delightful relaxation with my children, of whom my armed activities let me see too little, I was rudely interrupted by a visit from a mysterious stranger. He walked up to the house as though he knew where he was going and what he was after, and he had about him that indefinable air

which stamped him as a detective—I could smell sleuths in those days. He was tall and slender, and even his physical appearance suggested a corkscrew. Though he looked as innocent as most of his kind, there was more to him than was displayed on the surface, and I sized him up as a man with whom I would have to be careful.

He gave me the name he chanced to be using at the moment; but I paid no attention to it, as I knew it meant nothing. As soon as we were alone he handed me a formidable-looking document sealed with wax. It proved to be a letter from José Congosto, the Spanish consul at Philadelphia, offering me twenty-four thousand dollars to reveal to him the landing-place of the next expedition I took out. In one way I found myself admiring Congosto, for he neither wasted words nor minced them. He proposed that I indicate the point, close to the Cuban coast, at which it would be most convenient for me to have a gunboat intercept and capture us, with the assurance, of course, that no harm would come to me. I was to be protected in every way, and the Cubans were never to know nor have reason to suspect that I had betrayed them. If I accepted this proposal I was requested to visit Philadelphia on the second day following and receive the money, which was to be paid in advance by agents for Congosto at a time and place that would be indicated by the bearer of the letter. The com-

munication was written on the official stationery of the consulate, and, as further evidence of its authenticity, the consulate seal was affixed to it. I had never seen Congosto's handwriting, but there was no reason to doubt that the signature was his, as it purported to be.

To gain time and also to give the impression that I was considering the offer, I read the remarkable document over several times, while the detective watched me so closely that it almost made me nervous. My manner must have deceived him somewhat, for he half smiled, in a self-satisfied sort of way, when I asked him:

"What has become of that other thousand dollars? An offer of that amount of money would be made in round figures, and not as though you were buying something by weight."

"I have no doubt that matter will be arranged to your entire satisfaction when you meet the parties in Philadelphia, if you accept their proposition," he replied.

"That is a lot of money to offer a man who hasn't got twenty-four dollars in his pocket," I suggested, as though I was thinking aloud.

"It is more than you will ever make working for the Cubans," was the quick response.

"Yes," I assented, after apparently thinking seriously for a minute or two; "I believe that is true."

My caller again smiled encouragingly; but it was because he did not catch my full meaning;

he did not understand that it was not for money alone that I was working with the Cubans.

Several minutes of strained silence followed. Each one of us was trying to get the other to talk, and each was afraid of saying too much. The detective refused to show his hand, except in response to suggestions, so I was forced to lead him on a little.

"It seems to me," I said, "that if I were to do a thing like that I ought to get more money for it. While it might not become definitely known that I had 'leaked,' it would be suspected, and my usefulness in the kind of work I have been doing, which is the work I like best, would be destroyed. Therefore I should be paid enough so that I could retire and do what I pleased. I seem to be the only man who is able to land expeditions whenever he wants to, and if you should buy me off it might so dishearten the Cubans that they would give up the fight. If they can't get arms into Cuba they can't continue the war."

The detective thought he had me going, which was some reward for such a long speech. "That is just what we want!" he exclaimed, almost with enthusiasm. "The offer of twenty-four thousand dollars is simply a basis for negotiations. I have no doubt they will pay you much more than that if you will do as they wish; they might even pay you twice as much."

After some general discussion as to how the

thing might be accomplished, the detective went away with the understanding that I would meet Congosto's agents in Philadelphia two days later, though I had not told him so. He gave me a card on which was written the time and place of meeting, and it was intimated that I would find Congosto himself there.

My wife's sympathies for the Cubans were as strong as my own. When I told her who and what my visitor was and the nature of his business, she was furious.

"If I had known that," she declared, "I would have thrown a bucket of boiling water on him." Hot water was her favorite weapon in shooing detectives away from the house.

Instead of going to Philadelphia on the appointed day, I went to the revolutionary headquarters in New York, at 86 New Street, where I found Mr. Palma, Mr. Rubens, General Nuñez, and Dr. Castillo closeted together in one of the private rooms, earnestly discussing some question of policy. I listened to their conversation for a few minutes, and then handed my interesting letter to Nuñez. His mind was filled with the subject they were discussing, and after opening the letter, but scarcely glancing at it, he laid it on the desk. Mr. Palma carelessly picked it up and began to read it. As he grasped its purport he became greatly agitated and his hands shook so that he had to put the letter down on the table to finish reading it. He read it to the

others, and they joined in his excitement, with the exception of Rubens, who never lost his head, no matter what the provocation.

"Where you get it, where you get it?" shouted Mr. Palma, in the broken English he always used when he was disturbed.

I told him it had been delivered to me by a Spanish agent two days before, and gave him a résumé of our conversation.

"Well, what you do, what you do?" asked Mr. Palma.

"I'm not going to do anything about it," I replied. "I brought it over to give it to you. You can do what you like with it."

"We will have Señor Congosto arrested," exclaimed Palma. "We will punish him for trying to corrupt our organization."

Rubens smiled. "We will do nothing of the kind," he calmly said. "We are not in strictly legitimate business ourselves; let us not forget that."

The force of his argument was apparent. The question was then raised as to whether it might not be permissible, under all of the conditions, for me to give the Spaniards a false tip as to our next destination, take their money, and turn all or a part of it into the revolutionary fund. I refused point-blank to be a party to such an arrangement, and the others agreed with me. It was our opinion that, while we might be violating the written law to the extent of giving

"aid and comfort," as the statute phrased it, to a people who were ambitious to be free, we could afford to leave all infractions of the moral law to our enemies.

Consequently it was decided to simply file the Congosto letter away with other jealously guarded documents which, despite their interesting nature, might never see the light of day. We had a spy in the Spanish legation at Washington who sent us copies of most of the important communications that passed between Minister de Lome and his government. He kept us fully advised as to everything he saw and heard, and his observations covered nearly everything in which we were deeply interested. We never had any doubt that somewhere in our organization there was a man who was drawing a regular salary for rendering a like service to the Spanish minister; but our vital secrets were known to so few people that there were very few "leaks" that amounted to anything. On the other hand, through this unknown source, which we never exerted ourselves to run down, we were able, at the proper time, to place Mr. de Lome in possession of some very valuable *misinformation* which made it easier to carry out our plans. When he thought he knew what we proposed to do, there was less danger of interference with what we really intended to do.

It happened that at the very time Congosto's proposition was made to me we were planning

a big expedition, and the month following the visit of his emissary was filled with activity. General Roloff had been indicted in 1895 for taking a filibustering expedition out of Baltimore on the *James Woodall*, an English steamer. They tried to make a landing near Nuevitas; but after one boat-load of arms had been sent ashore the captain went into a panic over an imaginary war-ship and ran away. The balance of the cargo was dumped overboard, and the ship returned to Baltimore, where the captain turned state's evidence against Roloff. His trial had been postponed from time to time, but it was to come up in February, and it had been announced that there would be no further adjournment. When Roloff returned from his trip with the *Laurada*, whose cargo was landed by the *Dauntless* during her busy week, he did so much talking that he was indicted in New York. His trial on this charge was also set for the latter part of February. In making parlor conversation he had told so much about what he had done, and what he thought he had done, that the government had him dead to rights in both cases.

The Spaniards regarded Roloff as a dangerous man and were determined that he should not go to Cuba. We who knew him could not imagine where they got the information on which they based their estimate of him, but it would never do to have the secretary of war in the

provisional government and Mr. Palma's brother-in-law go to jail, no matter what the circumstances. Hence it was decided that he should go to Cuba, even against his will, to get him out of the way and at the same time worry the Spaniards. However, the expedition which he was to accompany could not be sent away until after the dates set for his trials, so I arranged to take him on a cruise through Long Island Sound, as the only sure way of keeping him out of the hands of the law. We knew his bonds would be forfeited in both cases; but they amounted to only a few thousand dollars, and from the standpoint of sentiment alone his liberty was worth that much.

One afternoon early in February, a few days before he was due to go to Baltimore for trial, Roloff and I, accompanied by Dr. J. A. Brunet, a young Chilian friend of his who had been of considerable service to us, and wished to go to Cuba, went over to visit F. E. Fonseca, who lived on Pacific Street, in Brooklyn. Half a dozen detectives followed us and posted themselves in the front and rear of the house. Among those who were waiting for us was a barber, and Roloff was relieved of his heavy black beard and mustache, the loss of which so changed his appearance that his most intimate friend would not have recognized him. Soon after dark we went up to the roof, made our way across the tops of several intervening houses of

about the same height, and descended into one occupied by another friend of the revolution, who was waiting for us at the open scuttle. From this unwatched residence we stepped into a waiting carriage and drove off into the night, leaving our other conveyance standing in front of the house we had first entered, with the detectives hanging closely about it so they would be sure to miss nothing.

At Hunter's Point we went aboard the tug *Volunteer*, which had tied up at the dock a few minutes before we arrived, and proceeded slowly up through the familiar swirls of Hell Gate. For nearly two weeks we zigzagged back and forth across the Sound, putting in at Whitestone, Cow Bay, Glen Cove, Oyster Bay, Bridgeport, New Haven, New London, and Greenport. All of these landings were made at night, and at each place I sent a man ashore to telephone Mr. Palma, over a private line which we knew was secure from eavesdroppers, to keep in close touch with developments in New York. Roloff, Brunet, and I kept out of sight when we were inshore or close to another vessel. It was about as unpleasant a trip as could be imagined, for the weather was very cold and stormy, the accommodations were cramped, and Roloff was seasick every minute of the time that we were not made fast to a dock. Finally off Montauk Point the tug *Commander* met us and took off Roloff and Brunet, with whom she steamed for

Barnegat by the outside route, while I returned to New York to take a hand in affairs that were shaping up there.

This expedition carried more elements of destruction than the one with which we had bid defiance to Mr. Cleveland's second neutrality proclamation. The shipment included twenty-five hundred rifles, a dynamite gun, two Hotchkiss twelve-pounders, two Colt's machine-guns, which we called "mowing-machines," from the fact that they fired six hundred shots a minute; some thousand of machetes, twenty-five tons of dynamite, an enormous amount of ammunition, and some medical supplies. The machine-guns were a present from William Astor Chanler, a rich New-Yorker, who expected to accompany them in search of excitement. As originally planned, this trouble-making tour of the tropics was something out of the ordinary, but it turned out to be the most complicated one we had ever handled. No less than nine vessels were required to get it away, and there was a lot of artful dodging before it was finally cleared.

Knowing that the Spaniards expected us to continue our successful activity in Florida, we had thought we might steal a bit of a march on them by despatching the expedition from New York; but unforeseen delays and the disappearance of Roloff caused the detectives to become suspicious as to our real scheme, and they soon surrounded us in force. We had started out to

produce an involved situation by having the expedition start, technically, from British soil. To that end the *Bermudă*, in command of Ed Murphy, was sent to the island for which she was named with a cargo of coal. After discharging the greater part of her load she was directed to await orders, which were to be cabled to Murphy. General Nuñez, Cartaya, and Chanler sailed secretly on the *Bermuda*. The *Laurada*, which was lying at Baltimore, was to tow a schooner carrying arms and Cubans to Watlings Island, or San Salvador, east of the Bahamas and two hundred and fifty miles due north of the east end of Cuba, where they were to be transferred to the *Bermuda* and landed by her. The *Laurada's* machinery was in such bad shape that it was not safe to transport the cargo in her; but she was good enough to tow a ship, which could proceed under sail if the steamer happened to blow up.

When we started to get the *Laurada* away from Baltimore, a succession of libels were filed against her, many of them on unjust claims, and all inspired by the Spanish minister. Though we could have beaten most of these claims, we could not afford to fight them on account of the time it would take, so they were paid as quickly as possible. Then the government inspectors held up the ship on the ground that she was unseaworthy. They finally consented to allow her to go to Philadelphia to have her boilers

rebuilt, but limited her to a steam-pressure which gave her a speed of only seven knots an hour. In addition to this, her owner, John D. Hart, who had not yet been sent to prison for the *Laurada's* previous filibustering trip, was required to promise that she would not go to Cuba, which he readily did, as we did not then expect to use her in landing the cargo.

It was not until February 26th that she at last cleared from Baltimore; but we had known for several days that she would soon be released. Instead of going to Philadelphia she proceeded to the rendezvous. In the mean time the arms and ammunition had been brought down from Bridgeport to New York on the steamer running regularly between the two ports and left aboard of her when the rest of the cargo was discharged. The three-masted schooner *Donna T. Briggs*, commanded by a fresh-water skipper named Gurney, was tied up on the opposite side of the dock, with fifty Cubans concealed in her hold. After dark the gates of the pier were locked, and the arms were carried across the dock and stowed away on the *Briggs*. As soon as the transfer was completed a tug took hold of the schooner and towed her down off the Highlands of Navesink, below Sandy Hook.

When I left home on the afternoon of February 27th I was accompanied by my son Fisher, who carried my grip. The detectives who were watching the house followed us, as usual, and

brushed against us as we boarded a ferryboat in Jersey City for lower Manhattan. The sleuths went forward, while Fisher and I stayed aft; and as the ferryboat pulled out of her slip I jumped ashore and went aboard of another ferry that was just leaving for Twenty-third Street, New York, three miles north of where the other one landed. The discomfited detectives held a conference and cleverly concluded to stay with Fisher and my bag, as there was nothing else for them to do. I had instructed Fisher to shake off the sleuths, if possible, and meet me at Broadway and Twenty-third Street at eight o'clock. When I cautiously approached him at the appointed place he signaled that the detectives were watching him, so I slipped away minus my baggage.

After seeing the *Briggs* away, I went across to the Jersey side of the Hudson in the tug *Josephine B.*, to pick up the dynamite and bombs. We got the cargo aboard without being observed, so far as we could see; but when we started down the river we discovered that we were being followed by another tug, which evidently was well loaded with detectives, deputy United States marshals, customs officers, and Spanish agents. We ran close enough to her to make out some of the men who were on board, and cruised around until we were sure she was trailing us.

This was rather an unexpected development, but we were not entirely unprepared for it.

The McAlester Company, which did all of our towing, had two steam lighters, under waiting orders and with banked fires, tucked away in a dark corner of a marine basin in Brooklyn. We dodged around for some time and then ran into the basin and alongside of the lighters, as though we had abandoned the trip and were going to tie up for the night. But the guardians of international law knew better than that. They shrewdly guessed that we had run in there only to throw them off the scent, so they made a loud pretense of going away, and then quietly crept back and laid off where they could watch the mouth of the basin. They were determined we should not leave without their seeing us; but they did not consider it necessary to observe what went on inside. While they were conducting this anticipated performance we softly shifted our cargo onto the two lighters, dividing it so that the load would not be large enough to attract attention, and also to save time in loading and unloading. We then rigged up a framework on the *Josephine* and covered it with tarpaulins so that to all outward appearances she still carried the cargo with which she had entered the basin. I went on board of one of the lighters, along with twenty-five Cubans and a few Americans who were to accompany the expedition, all of whom had been under cover on the tug.

The *Josephine* waited an hour or so and then slipped out of the basin, with every attempt at

secrecy. Her captain carried out his orders splendidly. When he saw that he was again under the anxious eyes of the encouraged sleuths, he started off up the Hudson at full speed, with the Spanish tug in hot pursuit. The chase continued for twelve or fifteen miles, when the captain of the *Josephine*, apparently convinced that he could not shake off his pursuer, turned around and ran back down the river and into the lower bay, where he suddenly came to an anchor. The delighted detectives, who were by this time convinced that they had prevented our departure, ordered the commander of their craft to follow suit, and the two vessels laid close together until the next forenoon. Then the *Josephine* stripped off her mask and resumed her customary pursuits, and it dawned on the fussy foxes that they had overlooked something.

When the two tugs started on their race up the river the lighters steamed out of the basin and down through the Narrows in pursuit of the *Briggs*. We had been delayed so long that by the time we caught up with her, off the Highlands, she had taken the towing-line from the *Laurada*, and they were waiting for us. The dynamite was transferred to the schooner; but most of the party went aboard the steamer, where there were better accommodations.

"Throw me a line for my trunk," I shouted to Sam Hughes, who was captain of the *Laurada*. I had the laugh on him when his men hauled

aboard a cigar-box filled with pipes and tobacco, which was the only dunnage I carried on that expedition. In addition to General Roloff and Dr. Brunet, who had been brought down from Montauk Point on the *Commander*, we had on board Major Salvador Castroverdi, who was returning to the field; Augustin Agramonte, of the famous fighting family, who was in charge of a corps of dynamite experts; and Emory Fenn, a young American electrical engineer in command of a torpedo corps.

Hoisting the dynamite aboard the schooner was slow work, and it was well along in the day before the last lighter left us and we set out toward Cuba. Officers and passengers on passing coastwise steamers had recognized the *Laurada* and witnessed the transshipment of the cargo. When they got up to New York they talked about what they had seen. In that way the Spanish agents secured their first tangible clue as to just what had happened. The revenue cutter *Manhattan* was at once despatched in search of us. Luckily she ran into a thick fog and then into a blinding snow-storm off Barnegat, which delayed her long enough to permit us to escape. On her way back to New York, after having wandered aimlessly about for three days, she blew out a boiler tube and had to be towed to her dock, which should have taught her something about chasing filibusters.

On account of the steam-pressure to which we were limited, and with the schooner in tow, we made what seemed to be very slow progress; yet we were off Watlings Island in just a week. It had been supposed that the *Bermuda* would be waiting for us there, as orders had been cabled to Murphy to start from Bermuda three days after we left New York; but she was nowhere in sight. We waited for her a week; and when there was then no sign of her it was clear that something had gone wrong, and we were forced to revise our plans. I proposed that we make the landing with the *Laurada*. Captain Hughes, who, of course, represented her owner, demurred at this on account of the strong probability that, in her crippled condition, the ship would be captured. I knew the vessel had been offered for sale for eighteen thousand dollars, so it was agreed that if she was captured or sunk the Cubans would pay twenty thousand dollars for her. If we ran afoul of a war-ship and could not get away, I announced that I would open the *Laurada's* sea-cocks and sink her, in which case all hands would have to take to the small boats and do the best they could to escape to the Cuban coast or lose themselves among the shoals and keys of the Bahama Bank; if we were discovered while making the landing we were to blow up the ship and go into the bush with the Cubans. This plan was agreed to, and the cargo was put aboard the *Laurada*. Captain

Hughes put his wife and his mate, who refused to go with us, on the *Briggs*, and Captain Gurney, who had been nursing an increasingly heavy heart from the moment we left New York, sailed merrily away for Norfolk.

We ran down to Verde Key, sixty miles north of Cuba, and laid there from Friday morning, March 19th, until Saturday forenoon, so that the chances of being interfered with would be minimized by the happy habit of the Spanish gunboats of running into large ports for their week-end parties. The expedition was to be landed one hundred miles west of Cape Maysi in Banes Bay, which is separated by a narrow peninsula from the much larger Nipe Bay. The latter was a favorite loafing-place for war-ships, and we knew there would be at least three or four of them there; but there was a strong line of rebels along the peninsula, and we had confidence that they would prevent word of our presence from reaching the enemy's naval force. Banes Bay is reached by a narrow and exceedingly tortuous channel three miles long. There was no one on board who had ever been through it, and no one who knew the channel would attempt to take us in; they had all insisted that it was impossible for a ship even as small as the *Bermuda*, which was smaller than the *Laurada*, to get through it.

The sun was taking its last look around for the day when we reached the coast and en-

tered the little river. To guard against attack from the rear we mined the mouth of the channel with two five-gallon demijohns of nitroglycerin, which were connected up with wires running to the shore, where one of Fenn's Cuban experts was stationed with instructions to blow up any ship that tried to follow us. By the time this welcome to meddling war-ships was completed it was so dark that from the bridge I couldn't see the bowsprit, so it was a case of going in entirely by the chart. I hadn't a great deal of faith in Spanish charts, for on my first trip around the east end of Cuba I had discovered that Cape Maysi was fifteen miles east of its location on the chart, and so reported on my return to New York, with the result that a new and correct chart was soon issued by the United States Hydrographic Office. That there were not more wrecks when the old chart was used was due to the fact that the hills at the east end of the island were easily made out during the day, and at night the cape was indicated by a powerful light.

However, in this case there was nothing to do but trust to the chart—and to luck. The engines were slowed down to a speed that gave us a bare steerageway, and we literally felt our way through the invisible lane of endless twists and turns. Many times we heard the bow and stern scraping overhanging branches of trees we could not see as we squirmed around sharp cor-

ners. At the speed at which we were going there was not much danger of going aground, for the channel, though very narrow, was deep; but we shaved the sides of it repeatedly. It was daylight when we entered the bay—it had taken us ten hours to go three miles—and tied up to trees on the port hand, alongside of an old wharf.

On the opposite side of the beautiful bay, less than three miles away, was a detachment of one hundred Spanish troops in a fort built of railroad iron. From the manner in which they ran around and waved their arms when they saw us pushing our nose through the trees I judged that they at first took the *Laurada* to be a phantom ship. Becoming convinced that she was a reality, they waited a long while for us to set a flag, which I declined to do. Then a dozen of them jumped into a boat and started to row across to us. When half-way over they changed their minds and returned in a hurry, which was disappointing, for I had hoped to capture them and put them to work unloading the cargo. As soon as we began to send men ashore with bundles of rifles and boxes of ammunition, it struck them that we were filibusters; and they fired off their guns and raised a great hullabaloo. They might better have saved their powder, for the sound did not carry far enough to give the alarm, and they lacked the courage to attempt to fight their way through the Cuban

line and summon the fleet of war-ships in Nipe Bay.

It took us all day and all night to unload our cargo, and when it was all piled up the old dock looked like a warehouse. As soon as we tied up, a messenger was sent to General Garcia, who was encamped only a few miles back in the hills, and he came down with three thousand men and got all the stuff away before the Spaniards could get together a force that dared to attack him. Roloff and his party joined Garcia's forces. Through it all a cloud of thick, blue smoke rising from the little fort across the bay indicated that its cowardly occupants were giving themselves up to much futile chatter. They might have made it lively for us while we were unloading, before General Garcia appeared with his troops; but to attack us effectively they would have had to move around the bay—and they could not take their fort with them.

We went out at daylight on Monday, and when I saw the channel I wondered how we ever got through it. The Cuban explosive expert, tired and sleepy, but none the less watchful, was still on guard at the mouth of the river. I sent word to him to be careful not to blow us up if we were chased back into the snaky stream, but to set off his nitroglycerin under the pursuing ship. This precaution was taken because of the possibility that we would run into one of the gunboats from Nipe Bay starting out on its

weekly patrol; but there was nothing threatening in sight, and we set an undisturbed course for Wilmington, Delaware. We arrived there at night, and Captain Hughes and I went ashore at once and started for New York.

In the depot at Philadelphia, where we changed cars, we ran into the mate whom Hughes had put aboard the *Donna T. Briggs* when he refused to stay with the *Laurada*. The schooner had reached Norfolk several days before, and the renegade mate, after a very unsatisfactory talk with Mr. Hart, owner of the *Laurada*, was on his way to New York to see the Cubans. The only thing of value he possessed was his ticket to New York, and Hughes took that away from him, leaving him stranded. The *Laurada* was promptly seized, largely in consequence of too much talk by her former mate; but the government could not make out a case against her, and she was soon released. Hughes went to Ireland to avoid trouble; but I was not even arrested.

It developed that Murphy was drunk when he received his sailing orders at Bermuda, and tore up the message without reading it. A week later Nuñez and Chanler, becoming impatient, cabled to New York and got at the bottom of things. The *Bermuda* sailed at once for Watlings Island, but did not get there until after we had landed the expedition. She hung around the

island for three days, when a British cruiser came up and chased her away, and she proceeded to Philadelphia. The party aboard of her was small, but it harbored enough disgust to supply a multitude.

X

GENERAL WEYLER'S THREAT ANSWERED

CAPTAIN-GENERAL WEYLER, the Spanish viceroy in Cuba, was made exceedingly angry by the landing of the *Laurada's* great cargo of war supplies, to say nothing of General Roloff and his party, at Banes, in full view of a highly indignant but impotent Spanish garrison, and with a large naval force innocently indolent a few miles away on the other side of us. In the heat of his passion he drew down further discomfiture on his troubled head by sending word to me, through an American newspaper man stationed at Havana, that he intended to have me hanged at the first opportunity. This choleric assurance was not at all disquieting, for there never was any doubt in my mind as to what my fate would be if I were captured, and the manner of its execution made little difference; but I was a little annoyed by his suggestion that I would be so thoughtless as to allow his men to get their hands on me.

"Captain O'Brien has evaded us thus far," said the diminutive commander of all the Spanish forces in Cuba, half in reply to some question

concerning the landing at Banes, "but his very daring will eventually deliver him into our hands. Sooner or later we will get him, and when we do, instead of having him shot along with his Cuban companions, I am going to have him ignominiously hanged from the flagpole at Cabañas, in full view of the city. You can communicate that information to him if you wish. He might be interested in knowing what is in store for him, for we surely will capture him some day."

Cabañas is the old fortress, once impregnable, but now only a magnificent ruin, in which Cubans who were known or suspected to be in sympathy with the revolt were lined up against a wall and shot almost every day during the war. The rampart along which these executions and murders took place, the granite blocks spattered with blood and nicked by tens of thousands of Mauser bullets, was subsequently decorated with a bronze tablet in memory of the patriots who died there.

Weyler's boast was promptly conveyed to me, with an amusing description of the dramatic effect with which it was delivered. Through the same channel I sent back this reply: "To show my contempt for you and all who take orders from you, I will make a landing within plain sight of Havana on my next trip to Cuba. I may even land an expedition inside of the harbor and take you away a prisoner. If we should

capture you, which is much more likely than that you will ever capture me, I will have you chopped up into small pieces and fed to the fires of the *Dauntless.*"

The concluding section of the message was intended only as an ironical reply to Weyler's empty threat; but he took it seriously. When it was repeated to him he flew into a rage and denounced me as a "bloodthirsty daredevil." On our next expedition, which followed closely on the heels of this exchange of compliments, I made good my promise, and it was only by a mere chance that Weyler escaped being blown to pieces by some of the dynamite which was landed within easy reach of the big guns that guarded his palace.

The newspaper man through whom this diverting correspondence was conducted was one of the most useful of our secret supporters. While, being an American, he was supposed to sympathize with the rebels, the full extent of his friendliness was not suspected, so he managed to maintain the pleasant relations with the Spanish authorities which his work required. He used to take long sailing trips, ostensibly only for pleasure; but more than once he met us off Lobos Key lighthouse, which was one of our outposts. Lobos Key is a tiny coral rock at the southerly edge of the Bahama Bank, and less than twelve miles from the Cuban coast, a little east of midway of the island. On account

of its location it was a favorite loafing-place for the Spanish gunboats, whose commanders were much given to graft. Instead of taking on the three or four hundred tons of coal which they were supposed to consume on a cruise, they would purchase only half as much, and put the money for the other half in their pockets. Then they would anchor off Lobos Key, with banked fires, until they had theoretically consumed the coal they hadn't bought, when they would proceed to the east or west. It was nothing unusual for four or five of these thieving war-ships to be riding at anchor in this soft spot at one time.

The Lobos light was kept by an old Englishman and his nephew, and one of the first things I did, when our organization got down to business, was to establish an amicable arrangement with them, which was easy, for they despised the cowardice and crookedness of the Spaniards. We carried down fresh vegetables and delicacies for them on every trip, and in return they kept us posted as to the movements of the gunboats. We also used the lighthouse as a post-office, and messages were left there for us by our newspaper-correspondent ally and by the Cubans, who, when the coast was clear, sailed across the narrow channel in their little sloops. Eventually the Spaniards got onto this scheme, and shortly before the *Maine* was blown up they made representations to the British government which

resulted in the removal of the friendly lighthouse-keepers.

The keepers of the light at North Elbow Key, or Double-headed Shot Key, as it is known among sailors on account of the formation of the island, also gave us much information concerning the war-ships that were seen around Salt Key Bank, which was another of their idling places, though not so popular as Lobos Key, for it was not so conveniently situated. We stopped at one of these lighthouses in advance of nearly every landing, to get the latest bulletins as to what the war-ships were doing. With this information it was ordinarily a comparatively simple matter to dodge them. They had to be taken into our calculations, of course, but they never caused me much anxiety. It was only when we were making a landing at some point from which we could not easily run away that I regarded them as an element of danger. So long as we had anything approaching an even chance with them I did no worrying, for they could not shoot straight enough to hit anything smaller than the island of Cuba, and they could hit that only at short range.

When Captain Pillsbury, of the *Vesuvius*, was twitting me one day at Jacksonville about the added precautions which had been taken by both the United States and Spain to prevent filibustering, which he professed to believe would soon put an end to our operations, I said to him:

"If the Navy Department and the revenue cutters will leave us alone I will carry excursions to Cuba with every expedition. I will advertise the time and place of our departure, and guarantee that every expedition will be landed on time." I think the captain thought for once I was bluffing; but I wasn't; I knew the Spaniards. I judged them by what I had seen of them, and I may add that I have never had occasion to alter my estimate of their fighting ability on either sea or land. They are prone to panic at the unexpected scratch of a match, and have other racial weaknesses; which, however, must not be taken to mean that there are not some brave, honest, and high-minded Spaniards. They are the strong spirits that have not been fouled by their surroundings, and are the exceptions which prove the rule. Not many of this class were sent to Cuba.

The trouble with the native Spaniard is that he has lived too much in the past, and devoted too much time to the worship of his justly distinguished ancestors. The vengeance of a natural law has been visited upon him. The Spaniards were once the aristocrats of Europe—but that was four hundred years ago, and, like all aristocracies, they have deteriorated. But it is significant of the dormant strength of the old Spanish blood that the Spaniard away from his native environment, and the musty traditions of past glories, readily accepts the spirit of the

modern civilization and conforms to it. Some of the highest type of Cuban citizens are Spaniards who have long lived there.

Preparations for another expedition were begun as soon as the *Laurada* returned from her triumphant trip to Banes. The revolution was going along splendidly, and the only cry that was heard from the field was an insistent call for more arms. By this time the number of Secret Service men, Pinkerton detectives, special Treasury agents, Spanish spies, and heterogeneous hounds of all grades and colors who were making frantic efforts to get some clue as to what we were doing, had been increased from scores to hundreds. They were so thick around New York and Jacksonville that, though they found out nothing, we could not turn around without falling over one or two of them; so we temporarily transferred our base of operations to Wilmington, North Carolina.

The old schooner *John D. Long*, which was laid up there after having done service as a pilot-boat in her declining years, was chartered with the intention of loading her with arms and having her towed to within easy distance of Cuba. When I went to look her over I found she was in such bad shape as to be incapable of weathering a gale, and I reported that it would be unsafe to use her for the transportation of arms. Furthermore, she could carry only seventy tons, while the cargo which had been ordered for this

trip weighed nearly one hundred tons and was valued at eighty thousand dollars. It was, therefore, decided to carry our coal supply on the schooner and put the arms on the ocean-going tug *Alexander Jones*, which had been engaged to do the towing. With her bunkers practically empty, and taking coal from the schooner every day or two, the *Jones* could carry the cargo without any trouble.

While we were patching the schooner up, to improve the chance that she would stay afloat until she had served our purpose, I received word from Fritot to get out of Wilmington, as the detectives had heard I was there and were coming in search of me. Cartaya and I promptly disappeared and went to Florence, South Carolina, an inland town where not even a Pinkerton man would look for a filibuster. However, we ran right into a really good detective in the person of the proprietor of the hotel at which we stopped. He soon guessed who we were, and the word was whispered around until it reached half of the townspeople; but they were such warm Cuban sympathizers that no word of our presence was permitted to reach the outside world.

After snooping around for two weeks, the detectives concluded they had been drawn to Wilmington by a false scent and went away, which again gave us a fairly clear field. Though they had been unable to gather any information

that was at all definite, they left a lingering suspicion that we were planning some sort of a movement in that vicinity. The authorities thought it might be merely a blind to cover more serious operations elsewhere; but to make it impossible for us to get away from that port, if such was our purpose, two revenue cutters were left on guard in the harbor.

The two car-loads of arms and ammunition were shipped from New York to Jacksonville; but they were dropped out of the train at a little junction point, in accordance with a telegraphic order from Fritot which was handed to the conductor at the transfer station, and slipped over to Wilmington. They were run out onto the dock of the Wilmington & Newbern Railway, in the southern part of the city, where, on the night of May 13th, their contents were put aboard the *Jones*. While the tug was being loaded, one of our scouts brought word that some customs officers were approaching the wharf and that the revenue cutter *Morrill* was getting up steam; so we put out at once, leaving a small part of the cargo behind in one of the cars, which was quickly locked and sealed. The *Jones* steamed slowly down the river, and, though she passed within sight of the *Morrill* and it could be seen that she had a lot of stuff aboard, she was not interfered with; if she had appeared to be in a hurry she probably would have been held up. We anchored off the bar to wait for the schooner,

which was loading with coal at the Wilmington & Welsdon Railroad wharf while we were taking on the arms. As she was hauled down the stream she passed within hailing distance of the *Colfax*, the other revenue cutter which had been assigned to prevent any anti-Spanish activity, but aroused no suspicions. We passed a line to the *Long*, when the tug *Jacob Brandon* cast her off, and started unconcernedly south, for there was nothing about a crippled schooner being towed down the coast to arouse the curiosity of any cutter or cruiser we might encounter.

General Nuñez and sixty Cubans, who were to land with the arms, met us off Palm Beach in a fishing-schooner and came aboard. We then headed for the Dog Rocks at the northeast corner of Salt Key Bank, where we were to meet the *Dauntless*. The wreckers and pirates who lived there were an inquisitive lot, and they bothered us so much with their idle efforts to find out who we were and what we were doing that we moved down to Damas Key, farther south on the edge of the bank, to get away from them. We anchored there on May 18th. Two days later we were joined by the *Dauntless*, which had slipped out of Jacksonville light, and I went aboard of her with General Nuñez and Cartaya and twenty of the landing party. We coaled from the schooner and took on half of the cargo of arms, which we landed on May 21st,

ten miles east of Nuevitas. I did not wait until dark to go in, for two hours before we reached the landing-point we met a gunboat going west through the Bahama Channel, and, as she paid no attention to us, though we passed within seven miles of her, I took the chance that she would not return to trouble us.

The next morning, as we were hurrying back to the schooner, we passed the same war-ship off Key Frances, at the westerly end of the Bahama Channel. She was eight miles away on the port hand, loafing along at four knots an hour, when we ran past her at a speed of eleven knots. We had two new engineers aboard on that trip; and as soon as they saw the gunboat they began piling in coal, in a frantic effort to increase our speed, at a rate that sent out clouds of thick, black smoke. They paid no attention when I ordered them to quit trying to burn up all of our coal, so, to bring them to their senses and impress them with the fact that they were not running the ship, I rang them down to half speed. That command threw them into a state of terror that was almost pitiable; but to avoid more serious trouble they obeyed it. When we slackened speed it must have looked to the Spaniard as though we were challenging him to either a race or a fight, but he scorned us. I learned later that the pilot of the gunboat told her commander that the *Dauntless* was going by; but he said he did not want to bother with us. Possibly his

unconcern was due to a fear that we had another Mike Walsh aboard.

To keep my word with General Weyler, the balance of the cargo from the *Jones*, with most of the Cubans who were going to the front, was landed a mile and a half east of Morro Castle, which guards the entrance to Havana harbor, and scarcely more than three miles in an air line from the captain-general's palace. It happened that just at that time the rebels under General Alejandro Rodrieguez, who was commanding general of the army in the first Cuban Republic, had Havana closely surrounded. They were in need of arms, and there was no trouble in getting our cargo away from the landing-point, which would have been at best a difficult operation if such a vigorous campaign had not been in progress. General Rodrieguez was carrying the fight right up to the gates of the city. The night before we landed Colonel Nestor Aranguren, with a small party, held up a train three miles outside of Havana, on the line to Guanabacoa, in the hope of capturing a particularly cruel Spanish officer named Fondevilla, whom it was intended to shoot on the spot. The man Aranguren wanted was not on board; but he captured a dozen Spanish officers and two Cuban officers who had gone over to the enemy. The Spaniards were released in a few days, to save the trouble and expense of feeding them; but the two traitorous Cubans were hanged.

WEYLER'S THREAT ANSWERED

We arrived off Havana on the evening of May 24th. A number of steamships were anchored off the Morro waiting to go into the harbor at daylight, and we went close enough to them to satisfy ourselves that they were all merchant ships. The fact that they displayed all of the regulation lights was not good evidence that there was no war-ship concealed among them; for, two years before, the Spaniards had been given a lesson in running without lights which they never forgot. General Collaso was then planning an invasion of Pinar del Rio from Florida, and, in an effort to head him off, the gunboat *Sanchez Barcaztequi* ran out of Havana one night without showing a light. Just off the Morro the coaster *Mortera*, of the Herrera Line, ran full tilt into her and tore her open into the engine-room. The war-ship sank so quickly that her commander and most of the crew went down with her. This disaster effectually broke the Spaniards of a habit that is always dangerous for navigators who cannot find their way around in the dark. Except for the gunboat we found lying in wait for the *Three Friends* at the mouth of the San Juan River, so close inshore that she was in more danger of colliding with an ox-cart than with another vessel, I never saw a Spanish war-ship that did not display all of the lights required by marine regulations, and generally more. This gave us a great advantage over them, for we never showed so much as the light

from a match or a cigarette when we were anywhere near the Cuban coast.

We laid astern of the merchant ships until the moon went down, and then steamed up the shore and landed our cargo and party by the illumination from the lighthouse on Morro Castle. We could just as well have gone four or five miles farther down the coast, but I wanted to show General Weyler that if he was given to boasting I was not, and that it was a duty with me to keep my promises. If the distance could have been measured it might have been found that we were within a mile of the Morro; certainly we were not more than a mile and a half away. The Morro light is a brilliant flash that can be seen for eighteen miles, and every time it swung around one could have seen a pin on the deck of the *Dauntless*. Over the rising ground that separated us from the harbor and across the bay the lights on the hills back of Havana were in plain sight, and when the light from the Morro flashed on them the sentries pacing the walls of Cabañas stood out in bold relief. Back of the old Cabañas, toward the sea, was a partly completed modern fort which, with decent gunnery, could have blown us to pieces in two minutes, but every one seemed to be sound asleep.

While we were putting the arms ashore a steamship stood off and on about four miles away, and seemed, at times, to be watching us.

She might have been a Spanish war-ship, but she did not attempt to interfere with us. The beach at that point is very rocky, and there was some trouble and delay in landing the dynamite, which was packed in water-tight fifty-pound boxes, with beckets, or rope handles, at each end. The surf battered the landing-dories against the rocks every time they went ashore, and, fearful that these shocks would explode the dynamite, the Cubans dumped a lot of the boxes overboard in shallow water. The waves subjected them to much rougher usage than they could possibly have sustained in the boats; but, strange to say, not one of them exploded. Before daylight they were all washed up on the beach and recovered.

The next night a lot of this dynamite was set off under a train on which General Weyler was supposed to be going from Havana to Matanzas, where Dr. Pedro Betancourt was making things extremely uncomfortable for the Spaniards. In their hurry the rebels exploded their mine under a train just ahead of the one in which Weyler was traveling, and he escaped with a bad scare. But for this mistake his friends probably would have been called on to mourn his loss, for the first train was well broken up and most of its passengers were killed.

General Weyler went into a frenzy of rage when he discovered how my promise to him had been fulfilled. He threatened to have his com-

manders at the Morro, Cabañas, and the shore battery court-martialed, and his naval chiefs were hauled over the coals in a way that put gray hairs in their heads. The Cubans, on the other hand, were immensely elated, and the delegations in the United States made the most of the event in their educational campaign. The unopposed landing of an expedition within pistol-shot of the Morro was evidence to the American people, who always like to see the little fellow winning out in a fight, that the rebellion was a real war, and that the Cubans were rapidly gaining ground. The effect of the cordial sympathy thus created was soon made apparent to the Spanish minister at Washington, and as a result of it we were not surprised to learn, through our agent in his establishment, that, in the most diplomatic language, but none the less plainly, he had advised his government that the recall of Weyler would create a favorable impression in the United States and go far toward counteracting the gains which the Cubans had made in public sentiment. To some of his influential friends in Spain, to whom he wrote urging the recall of the captain-general, Mr. de Lome used stronger language. He told them, in effect, that we had "made a monkey of Weyler," and said he had abundantly demonstrated his unfitness to command in Cuba.

The fact that we had landed every expedition which we took out had counted against Weyler,

and there is no doubt that the one which we put ashore in response to his threat to have me hanged contributed very largely to his downfall. Though he did not leave Cuba until the middle of September, when he was succeeded by Ramon Blanco, who attempted too late to inaugurate a conciliatory policy, his recall was decided on soon after General Rodrieguez welcomed the arms and men that were landed by the *Dauntless*. In making this landing we really ran no greater risk than we always assumed, for I knew the last place the Spaniards would look for us was within sight of Morro Castle.

The *Jones* towed the *John D. Long* to Cape Canaveral, Florida, where she turned her loose and returned to Wilmington. The schooner sailed to Southport, and the *Dauntless* returned to Jacksonville. It was known she carried no arms when she went out, and as there was no way of proving she had been to Cuba she was not molested. The officers told us they knew we had tricked them, though they did not know, nor suspect, just how it had been done.

XI

WHEN THE LAW GOES BLIND

ONE of the most interesting expeditions of the war, filled with comedy and tragedy, high lights and shadows, in sharp contrast, quickly followed the landing of a cargo of contraband in General Weyler's front yard. The aggressive Fritot had everything ready to move by the time we returned to Jacksonville, and we were off to sea again with hardly a breathing spell.

Two car-loads of arms and ammunition were secretly shipped three hundred miles down the coast to Fort Lauderdale, an old trading-station twenty-five miles above Miami, where they were placed aboard the *Biscayne*, a stern-wheel coaster, along with thirty Cubans in command of Colonel Mendez. They were to be transferred to the *Dauntless* off New River Inlet, just above Fort Lauderdale, on Saturday, May 29th. As an evidence that luck was not always with us, it happened that a special Treasury agent named Hambleton, who had been fruitlessly on our trail for months, was enjoying a short vacation with a couple of English friends who were

living aboard a sloop which was lying at that precise spot. They suspected that something was up when the *Biscayne* slipped into the inlet and anchored on Friday night, so they cunningly remained in the cabin, out of sight, to watch developments.

The authorities had no idea that the *Dauntless* would start out on another expedition without taking on stores, so we were not followed when we put to sea on Thursday night. By the time we arrived off New River on Saturday morning a southeaster was piling up such a heavy sea that the shallow draft and heavily laden *Biscayne* dared not venture outside. The *Dauntless* drew too much water to go into the inlet, so we were forced to lay there until Monday before the weather moderated enough so the stern-wheeler could come out to us. As she left the inlet she sailed close to the sloop, and Fritot looked her over carefully, but saw no sign of life.

We had taken on coal and provisions from the *Biscayne*, which was lashed alongside, and were just starting to transfer the arms and ammunition, when a rowboat put out from the sloop and headed for us. Hambleton was seated in the bow, with a double-barreled shot-gun across his knees, and his friends were at the oars. I was in my room abaft the wheel-house, trying to get some overdue sleep, when I heard Fritot shout: "Don't let them come aboard." Glancing out of the window, as I did not care to show myself

unless it became necessary, I saw the rowboat close alongside. Tom Davis, the mate, tried to shove it off with a boathook, but Hambleton threw his gun in Davis's face and climbed over the rail. Pointing his weapon in the general direction of the crew and the Cubans, who had not paused in their efforts to get the *Biscayne's* cargo onto the *Dauntless* in the shortest possible time, he yelled:

"In the name of the law I command you to stop putting those arms on this vessel. You are all under arrest."

Every one stopped work, but only for a moment. Fritot stepped up to Hambleton and tickled his lower ribs with the muzzle of a revolver which he carried in his coat pocket. He did not display the pistol; but it was silhouetted by the strain on his light coat, and it could be seen his finger was on the trigger.

"Don't pay any attention to this person," said Fritot, in a voice so hard and cold that every word snapped. "He's not going to shoot any one. Go ahead and load the ship."

The men knew Fritot, and they turned to on the cargo without a second glance at the threatening shot-gun. Under the silent eloquence of the revolver that was pressed against him with a hand that did not tremble, the disturbed detective concluded it would be unwise to try to enforce his order.

"Where's the captain?" he angrily inquired, as he lowered his unsteady gun.

"On the bridge," curtly replied Fritot.

Hambleton started up the gangway leading to the pilot-house. I provided myself with a big revolver belonging to Cartaya, which was lying in the cabin, and met him at the door.

"Who the devil are you?" I asked, as though I knew nothing of what had gone on below.

"I am a special agent of the Treasury Department and a deputy United States marshal."

"Well, no matter who you are, don't point that gun at any one on this ship, or you will be shot before you can fire it."

He accommodatingly lowered his weapon and pointed it at his feet; but before we could continue our conversation Tom Davis and Charley Silva, one of our handy men, slipped up behind our quarrelsome visitor and threw him down onto the deck. Some one tossed his gun overboard, and half a dozen men jumped on him; but before they had done him any serious injury Fritot interfered, and the bruised and bewildered sleuth was hustled into his rowboat. His excited companions pulled back to their sloop, which soon sailed off up New River.

Two hours or more after Hambleton left us, by which time we had about half of the arms and ammunition on board, Cartaya, who was on watch, reported the smoke of a ship coming up from the south. She was too close inshore

to be anything but a prying war-ship, and, knowing the approximate whereabouts of most of the patrol boats, I took her to be the revenue cutter *Winona*, coming up from Key West on a scouting trip. The *Winona* could do no more than seven or eight knots an hour, which was only two-thirds the speed of the *Dauntless*, so I thought we had time to take on the rest of our cargo before she got close enough to prove dangerous. It was soon apparent, however, that the stranger was a much faster ship than the old *Winona*, so we cut loose from the *Biscayne* and put to sea on the jump. In the last-minute rush bundles of rifles and boxes of cartridges were thrown indiscriminately on the deck of the *Dauntless* without any pretense of stowing them.

We were obliged to run northeast, to get out of the bight in which we had been lying, before we could haul around to the southeast and head for the Bahama Bank. This right-angled course enabled the war-ship to pull up on us rapidly, and I soon made her out to be the cruiser *Marblehead*, Commander Elmer, then one of the fastest ships in her class. Smoke was coming from only one of her two stacks, so I knew she had steam up in but two of her four boilers. Under these conditions the *Dauntless* was her match in speed, and I fervently hoped her other boilers were out of commission. The Bahama Bank was seventy-five miles away, and our only chance

of escape was to get there first. In its shallow waters were uncharted channels known to but few people, and I knew the cruiser would not dare to follow us beyond the edge of the bank.

For an hour it was a beautiful race, with the *Marblehead* eight miles astern and both ships speeded up to the last notch. We were busily engaged in littering up our wake with empty boxes and coal-sacks, to make it appear that we were dumping our cargo overboard, and in stowing arms and ammunition away in the run under the floor and in an empty water-tank. Seeing that we were holding our own with him, Captain Elmer fired up his other boilers. After that the cruiser gained on us rapidly. When she got up to within two miles of us she fired a couple of blank cartridges as signals to heave to; but we paid no attention to them. Then she sent a solid shot away over our heads. The instant it struck the water, two miles ahead of us, General Nuñez ordered me to stop.

"Let's give him a race for it, anyhow," I urged. "He is not going to fire on his own flag."

"No, no!" shouted Nuñez. "We will take no more chances. The next time he will hit us. Stop, stop!"

His order had to be obeyed, so we lowered our flag, for the first and only time, put the helm hard over, and stopped.

The cruiser hove to a short distance away and sent a lieutenant aboard. As he was being

rowed to the *Dauntless* I found myself wondering what his attitude would be. While we never had been shown any favors by the war-ships assigned to watch us, I had gained the idea that sentiment in the navy was strongly opposed to the Spaniards. Men who love the sea, more than any other class, love a fight against odds, and from this I argued that the American naval officers must sympathize with the Cubans, though how far they would dare to go in showing their real feeling was another question. Unless the officers of the *Marblehead* put their blind eyes to the telescope we were in for serious trouble, for incriminating evidence was piled up all around us. Though as much of our cargo as could be concealed had been hidden away, the deck was still so cluttered up with boxes of cartridges and bundles of rifles that one could not walk about without stumbling over them. The rifles were strapped together in bundles of five and wrapped with burlap. Many of the covers had been torn in the hurry of getting them aboard, and the butts and muzzles of the guns could be seen through the rents. The boxes of cartridges were stamped in large letters ".43 CALIBER," and several of them had been broken open, revealing their contents.

When the lieutenant boarded us he was so gruff and apparently so unfriendly that one might have imagined him a Spanish officer; but the manner in which he conducted himself made

me proud of my country and its navy. He sternly called for the captain, and "Jim" Floyd, the negro pilot, who was the titular commander of the tug, stepped forward. In reply to questions that were fired at him like shots from a Gatling gun, Floyd said he had heard of a wreck on the westerly side of the Bahama Bank, and was in search of it. According to the reports, it was a large wreck, which accounted for his big crew. He innocently declared he had no idea that the cruiser was pursuing us until she dropped the shell ahead of us. The lieutenant accepted these statements without comment.

"What are these?" he asked, indicating a box of cartridges on which he was standing, and others lying alongside of it. "Sardines, I suppose."

"Yes," assented the amazed Floyd.

"I should think you would need them. With such a large crew you ought to carry plenty of food."

After looking the ship over, taking care to avoid an intimate acquaintance with our cargo, the young officer returned to the *Marblehead* to report. He took Floyd along, and Captain Elmer put him through another examination.

"Isn't Captain John O'Brien with you?" inquired the captain, after Floyd had repeated all he had told the lieutenant.

"I don't know," replied Floyd, who could lie cheerfully under such conditions, but not other-

wise. "There's a little gray-haired chap aboard whom they call 'Johnny.' Possibly he is Captain O'Brien."

"I guess that is he," said the captain, with a broad smile, of which Floyd told me with delight.

Another lieutenant was sent aboard the *Dauntless* with Floyd, and we were ordered to follow the cruiser to Key West, where we were turned over to the collector of customs. He sent out two inspectors who looked under the mattresses, in the coal-bunkers, in the galley, and every other place where they were sure no arms were concealed; but could find nothing that suggested filibustering. Armed guards were then sent on board, and we were held *incomunicado* for twenty-four hours, while Washington was communicated with. This was done to show the Federal authorities that the situation was being handled firmly and impartially, and also to keep inquisitive people who might testify against us away from the *Dauntless*.

Notwithstanding the reports of all of the searchers, orders were cabled from Washington to proceed against us—which was done, no doubt, to appease Spain—and General Nuñez, Colonel Mendez, Cartaya, Floyd, and I were haled before United States Commissioner Julius Otto on a charge of "organizing a military expedition against a friendly power." Otto and Cartaya were old friends. Before we were ar-

raigned Cartaya asked him, privately, what our bail would be, so it could be provided without delay.

"Bail be damned," replied the commissioner; "I am going to turn you all loose as soon as I get a chance."

When our case came up for trial, a week later, the naval officers and customs inspectors who had searched the *Dauntless* testified that they had found no arms nor any other evidence of a filibustering expedition, and we were dismissed without putting in any defense. The government was still reluctant to let the tug go; but she finally was released on orders from Washington, and we left Key West in a hurry. Jacksonville was our supposed destination; but as soon as we were out of sight we doused all of our lights and ran to Bahia Honda Key, just below Knight's Key, where we again met the *Biscayne* and took on the arms which we had left aboard of her when we ran away. It was almost daylight before the transfer was completed, so we laid behind the keys all day, under cover from the revenue cutters and war-ships that were looking for us, and did not start for Cuba until after dark.

Early in the morning of June 18th, when we were forty-five miles north-northeast of Key Piedras light, off Cardenas harbor, and pushing the *Dauntless* hard to make up for lost time, the crown sheet of the boiler blew up with a thunder-

ing report. The little ship shook and shivered as though she was going to pieces, and mud and grease, with which the boiler was badly fouled, were scattered all over her; but not a man was seriously injured. Fortunately, that was one of the very few trips on which we carried no dynamite.

We got sail onto the tug and headed due north. Two days later, near Alligator Reef light, on the Florida coast, we were picked up by the revenue cutter *McLane*, which was searching for us to prevent us from going to Cuba, and towed back to Key West. We reported that we had been disabled before we found the imaginary wreck, for which we were supposed to be looking, and the government generously ordered the *McLane* to tow the tug to Jacksonville to have her boiler repaired. She went into dry-dock there without removing her hoodoo cargo, which, after all of its vicissitudes, finally reached Cuba, but not until several months later.

The explosion on the *Dauntless* compelled us to get another vessel with which to run the double blockade while she was out of commission. The *Three Friends* was at our service, but I had condemned her, so far as our purposes were concerned. She was a poor sea-boat, had a weak boiler, and always needed fixing somewhere. Having been built in Jacksonville, she was well advertised in the newspaper reports that were sent out from there, and got a lot of glory out

of a very little work. It has been stated that she made as many as nine filibustering trips to Cuba; the fact is that she landed just three expeditions, and two of them were handled in such a way that the Spaniards captured a large part of the arms. The *Dauntless* made five times as many landings as the *Three Friends*, and without the loss of a man or a rifle through any fault of the ship or those on board of her.

As a makeshift we chartered the *Somers N. Smith*, a Pensacola pilot-boat, almost new, which drew too much water for the service for which she was built. The three-masted schooner *Donna T. Briggs*, which we had previously employed in the same capacity, was engaged to carry a shipment of arms to Orange Key, at the western end of the Bahama Bank, opposite the lower end of Florida. Her cargo was brought down to New York on the Bridgeport boat and put aboard the schooner at night by carrying it across the closed dock of the Bridgeport Line; that was one of the few things which we were able to do twice in the same way in spite of the wary watchers. Cartaya, half a dozen Cuban officers, Charley Silva, and one or two others of our regular men were on the *Briggs*. As soon as she was loaded a tug of the Moran Line, which I had boarded several hours before, after losing the detectives who set out to shadow me, took her in tow and started south. The tug had contracted to tow her six hundred miles down the coast; but when we

had gone only a little more than half that distance, with Cape Hatteras abeam, we ran into a nasty southwester. The wind worked around into the south, and increased until it was blowing a living gale and piling up a terrible sea. The towboat could not keep the schooner's head into the wind, and was in danger of being dragged down by the stern every time the tow-line tautened. Her captain was stricken stiff with fright, and refused to go any farther.

As soon as the tow-line was cast off Captain Gurney, of the *Briggs*, signaled that he also intended to turn tail and run for it. There was some excuse for the apprehension of the captain of the little tug; but for Gurney, with a big, stout vessel under him, there was none. Whether with or without his connivance, his ship was sure to be seized at the first port he put into, which would mean trouble for all of us and a setback to the revolution. I was determined there should be no unnecessary embarrassments of that kind; but the only way to prevent them was to get aboard the schooner. Gurney refused to lower a boat for me, and we could not get the tug's life-boat free from its lashings, in the buffeting to which we were being subjected.

I told the tugboat captain what I proposed to do, and he assisted me most ably, though with many profane expressions of entire confidence in my insanity. We ran up in the schooner's lee, getting as close to her as any man would have

dared to go, and threw Charley Silva a line, in the end of which I had made a running bowline. I shouted to Silva to hold fast, stepped into the bowline, and jumped overboard. Even Silva did not know what I intended to do until I struck the water; in fact, there was no one on the *Briggs*, and least of all the nervous Gurney, who had any idea I would try to board her. Though he was taken by surprise, Silva's mind worked quickly. He ran forward to the main-rigging so I would clear the ship's counter, which would have converted me into a good imitation of a very defunct jellyfish if it had smashed down on me, and hauled me aboard in smart style before Gurney or his crew had time to interfere.

Gurney skulked off to his cabin when I climbed over the rail; but when he was plainly told that his ship was going where it had been agreed she should go, whether he liked it or not, and with or without him, as he preferred, he became more tractable. I put enough canvas on the schooner to steady her and increased it as the gale subsided. When the weather cleared the wind held from the south, and it took us two weeks to beat down to Orange Key, where we found the *Somers N. Smith*, with General Nuñez and a large party of Cubans on board. They had been cruising around in search of us for several days.

I went aboard the tug, and we took three cargoes out of the schooner. The first one, which was accompanied by a small party of soldiers in

charge of General Rafael Gutierrez, who was going to join Maceo, was landed on Sunday, September 5th, just east of Cape Corrientes, on the south side of the west end of Cuba. The second one was put ashore on the following Thursday night at Point Tarara, ten miles east of Havana, with the Morro light flashing on us. The party which was landed with this cargo was commanded by General Rafael de Cardenas, who was chief of police of Havana under General Leonard Wood in the first American occupation. The third cargo was landed on the night of Wednesday, September 15th, at the mouth of the Arimao River, a mile and a half east of the lighthouse on Point Colorados, at the entrance to Cienfuegos Bay. The empty schooner set a course for Norfolk, and the *Smith* headed for Key West, where Nuñez, Cartaya, and I rowed ashore, while the tug went on to Pensacola.

When we returned to Jacksonville, after the smoke created by the burning words of the Spanish agents had cleared away, we found the *Dauntless* again in commission. The arms which she had on board when her crown-sheet blew out had been secretly landed and stored after she left the dry-dock. They were needed in Cuba, and we contrived to get them there. It was well known that Alphonso Fritot, who was directly in charge of revolutionary shipments at that productive point, was to be married on October 7th, and the detectives cunningly conjectured that

he was too much interested in that event to give serious thought to Cuban affairs. So they went to sleep. Before they woke up the arms and a large party of Cubans had been landed, on the night of October 10th, near Nuevitas Point.

As a result of this expedition the Spanish minister at Washington was instructed to again demand of the United States government that it put an end to filibustering. This he did, promptly and emphatically, at the same time telling President McKinley that but for the aid Americans were giving the Cubans the revolt would long ago have been suppressed. On October 22d, by which time I was away with another expedition, the President and his cabinet considered Spain's latest protest at a long session, at which the good ship *Dauntless* was the chief topic of conversation, as she had been at several previous meetings on the same general subject.

Following this cabinet conference Secretary of the Navy John D. Long gave out an official statement in which he declared that "everything possible has been done by this government to discharge the obligations imposed upon it by the neutrality laws." It was estimated that up to that time the Navy Department alone had spent one million dollars in attempting to prevent filibustering, in addition to heavy expenditures to the same end by the Treasury Department and the Department of Justice. The fleet

which was then patrolling the southern coast in opposition to our activities, was composed of the battle-ship *Maine;* the cruisers *Newark, Raleigh, Cincinnati, Detroit, Marblehead,* and *Montgomery;* the gunboats *Nashville, Wilmington, Helena,* and *Annapolis;* the monitor *Amphitrite,* the dynamite-gunboat *Vesuvius,* and the revenue cutters *Winona, Forward, McLane, Boutwell, Colfax,* and *Morrill*—rather a formidable force to be arrayed against one little tugboat. In the course of the next month or two several additional ships were assigned to watch us; but the results were the same as before.

While we were making the landing at Nuevitas Point, General Nuñez was getting another expedition ready, and I was hurried to New York to take charge of it. In some ways it was a repetition of the trip of the *Donna T. Briggs;* but the delays were greater, and there were more things that went wrong. The two-masted schooner *Silver Heels,* a coaster from Rockland, Maine, had been chartered to carry a cargo of arms from New York to Conception Island, on the easterly side of the Bahamas, where she was to be met by the *Dauntless.* One of the Moran tugs had been engaged to tow her six hundred miles, and she was to finish the trip under canvas. The steam-lighter *Lizzie Henderson* loaded the cargo at Bridgeport, and on Saturday night, October 16th, transferred it to the *Silver Heels* below Sandy Hook, where the

tug was to pick her up at daylight on Sunday.

Owing to the blunder of one of Mr. Palma's confidential messengers General Nuñez and I did not connect with the tug until Sunday afternoon. The *Silver Heels* had gone on, and it was two days later before we found her off Cape May. While we were hunting for her a northeast gale blew up, and, in less than two hours after we made fast to the schooner, the cowardly crew of the tug chopped the towing-hawser in two at the bitts. In the sea that was running Nuñez and I had a lively time of it in getting aboard the ship. One hard blow after another swept us back north, and we spent sixteen days in fighting our way to Conception Island.

There we found that the *Dauntless*, of which Cartaya was in charge, after having waited twelve days for us, had left six hours before for Key West, to replenish her empty coal-bunkers and larder. On her arrival there she was held up by orders from Washington. Through the good offices of Cartaya's friend, Ramon Alvarez, deputy collector of the port, she was released on an affidavit that she would proceed to Jacksonville, her home port, before going to any other port. In fixing the time by which she must reach Jacksonville, Judge Alvarez allowed time enough for her to visit Conception Island on the way, as Cartaya felt sure we had reached the rendezvous by that time.

All of these negotiations and adjustments took time, and we had been lying to an anxious anchor for nearly a week when the *Dauntless* hove in sight. To put us in a better position for quick action, she towed the *Silver Heels* around to Orange Key, where she was anchored, well out of the path of ordinary travel. The Cubans on the *Dauntless* were transferred to the schooner, and she was left in charge of Cartaya, while General Nuñez and I went aboard the tug and continued on to Jacksonville, to keep faith with the good Judge Alvarez. Our absence was unexpectedly prolonged, and the interval was an uneasy time for Cartaya. There was one incident in particular that caused him concern. One afternoon a schooner bore down through the short-cut channel from Stirrup Key, which was known to but few navigators, and hove to within short hailing distance.

"What schooner is that?" she called.

"The *Silver Heels*," shouted Cartaya, for her name could easily have been made out with glasses.

"Where are you from?"

"Havana," replied Cartaya, who was taken off his guard by the sudden inquiry.

"What did you take down there?"

"Potatoes."

"What did you get for them?"

"Seven dollars a barrel."

"Thank you," shouted the other skipper, as he hauled in his sheets and stood off on his course.

When Cartaya saw him head toward Havana after he cleared the bank, he became nervous. He feared the captain would report having spoken the *Silver Heels*, and that a Spanish gunboat would be after him the next day. His answers to the unexpected hails had been given at random; he knew no more about the price of potatoes in Havana than about the price of green cheese in Singapore. Luckily nothing came of his long-range interview, but when we heard the second chapter of the story, some time later, we congratulated Cartaya on his escape.

The schooner that hailed the *Silver Heels* was bound for Havana with a cargo of potatoes which was consigned to G. Lawton Childs & Co. Her captain went ashore immediately on his arrival, reported to Mr. Childs, and asked the price of potatoes. He was told they were worth two dollars a barrel.

"Oh, you can't give me that," laughed the skipper.

"Can't give you what?" inquired Mr. Childs, with surprise.

"That two-dollar-a-barrel talk. I met the *Silver Heels* off Orange Key, and she got seven dollars a barrel for her potatoes."

"Have you told any one else about having seen the *Silver Heels*?" gravely asked Mr. Childs, who, like most of the Americans in Havana, had intimate knowledge concerning the revolutionary activities.

"No; why?"

"Never mind why; but if I were you I wouldn't mention her name again as long as you are in Havana. If you do you are very likely to be hanged."

The astonished captain took the tip; likewise he took two dollars a barrel for his potatoes without further argument.

When the *Dauntless* returned to Jacksonville the *Vesuvius* was still on guard in front of the city, and, in addition to the war-ships and customs craft that were rushing frantically up and down the coast from Key West to Fernandina, two revenue cutters were patrolling the twenty-mile stretch of river running down to the sea. They watched us so closely that it was two weeks before we found a chance to slip away from them. On November 19th we left for Savannah with the schooner *Jennie Thomas* in tow, and, instead of returning at once to Jacksonville, we ran back to the *Silver Heels*. Under ordinary conditions we would have made two or three trips with her cargo; but it had been so long on the way that it was decided to land all of it at once. Our scuppers were awash when we had all of the arms and the landing party on board, but the sea was smooth, and we took the chance of running into bad weather.

On the night of November 28th, six weeks from the time the *Silver Heels* left New York, we started to put the expedition ashore at Cape

Lucrecia, two miles east of the lighthouse. It was not a good place for a landing; but the rebels were waiting for the arms at that particular spot, and it was too late to make a change. The keepers of the light discovered us at work and signaled to the commander of a Spanish gunboat that was lying back of a point a few miles to the eastward. When we had something more than half of the cargo ashore the gunboat suddenly swung around the point, with every light burning brightly. There was no time to get up the anchor, so the rope cable, to which we always laid in readiness for such emergencies, was cut in two with an ax, and we were off in a minute. The gunboat did not see us, though she ran through our wake. After searching for us for two hours, she returned and anchored in the exact spot from which we were discharging our cargo when we were interrupted. As we did not have enough stuff left to justify another landing, we returned to Jacksonville. The undelivered arms were landed at night below the city, and concealed close to the river. The authorities knew we had not been away on a pleasure trip, but the expedition had been so mixed up with delays and conflicting stories that they could make nothing of it.

Two weeks later the *Dauntless* left Jacksonville for Key West with two perfectly peaceful barges in tow. The Spanish minister heard of it, and, scenting more trouble, requested that

she be watched. Orders were again telegraphed Captain Sigsbee, who commanded the *Maine*, to keep his eye on the *Dauntless*. Six weeks later, after having been twice specifically directed to protect Spain's interests, the *Maine* was blown up in Spanish waters; but I never have believed that the Spaniards had anything to do with her destruction.

XII

THE SINKING OF THE "TILLIE"

THROUGHOUT my career as a filibuster, with all of the close shaves that go with persistence in that pleasant profession, I commanded but one expedition on which there was any loss of life; that was the tragic trip of the *Tillie*, which followed soon after the lively landing at Cape Lucrecia of the arms taken by the *Dauntless* from the *Silver Heels*. The *Tillie* was an old steamer that had been carrying freight between New York and New London, Connecticut, for a New England railroad. She became too small for that trade, and, after having been laid up for a while, was sold to McAlester Brothers, who put her in dry-dock at the foot of East Seventh Street in Brooklyn for a general overhauling. While undergoing repairs she was offered for sale at a bargain, and after I had pronounced her hull in good condition, and Frank Pagluchi had inspected and passed her machinery, the Cubans bought her.

Her purchase was dictated by a desire to land a large shipment of munitions of war in Cuba as quickly as possible, to offset the capital the

Spaniards were trying to make out of the death of Lieutenant-General Antonio Maceo, who was killed on December 7, 1897, five days after the *Dauntless* returned to Jacksonville from the landing of November 28th, as he was leading a detachment of troops against Havana. He had planned a quick, sharp raid on the capital to give the lie to Captain-General Blanco, who was loudly proclaiming that he had Maceo bottled up in Pinar del Rio, and that the revolt had finally been stamped out. Forty miles southwest of the city he encountered a small Spanish force, and, in the skirmish that followed, Maceo was instantly killed, almost by accident. As in the case of Marti, the Spaniards did not recognize him at first. When it was discovered that the most dashing of the rebel leaders had been put out of commission there was great rejoicing at Havana and Madrid, and General Blanco blatantly boasted that with his death the rebellion was actually at an end. It was feared that this might be believed, and we wished to prove to our American sympathizers that there was no thought of giving up the fight. General Ruis Rivera, whose landing from one of our expeditions had been followed by one of the most severe battles of the war, in which the Spaniards sought to prevent him from joining Maceo and gave him a running fight for sixty miles, succeeded to the command in Pinar del Rio, and began a vigorous campaign to divert

Blanco from the habit of issuing misleading proclamations.

In the hurry of getting the *Tillie* away the men who were overhauling her neglected to take out the tail-shaft, which was a fatal mistake, though that was the last place one would look for a break. With her repairs completed, as was supposed, Captain George W. Berry took her around to the easterly end of Long Island, with instructions to lay to between Montauk Point and Gardiner's Island, ten miles inside of the lighthouse. While the steamer was being repaired the sleuths became suspicious that we were planning another expedition though they had no clue as to what we were doing, and the force of detectives which constantly watched my home and trailed me every time I left the house was doubled. They had been fooled so often that they were on the alert every minute, and I had feared that I might have some trouble in eluding them; but a happy coincidence made it easy.

The thirtieth anniversary of my marriage fell on Friday, January 21st, and the neighbors, without any idea that they were aiding my plans, arranged to celebrate the event that evening. It was to be a surprise party for Mrs. O'Brien, who was sent over to Brooklyn to get her out of the way, and late in the afternoon thirty or forty of her friends took charge of things and proceeded to decorate the house. The detec-

tives, who knew what was going on, did not imagine that I would leave at such a time, so they accommodatingly relaxed their vigilance. As soon as it was dark, without even waiting for Mrs. O'Brien to come home, I slipped out by the back way and hurried over to New York, where Dr. Castillo, Cartaya, and a party of Cuban officers were waiting for me on a tug. We at once put off up through the Sound and reached the *Tillie* on Saturday morning.

Two tugs, towing two large lighters loaded with arms, arrived from Bridgeport at the same time. They had started for New York, according to the report that was given out, and the detectives were waiting for them there. The particular pride of this expedition was a beautiful dynamite-gun which had been on exhibition in New York, and was considered the most destructive weapon in the world, as well as the most terrifying. To keep it company there were several tons of dynamite, three thousand rifles, three million cartridges, several thousand machetes, and a lot of small arms and medical supplies. It was a cargo well calculated to arouse enthusiasm among the rebels and enable them to operate more effectively and offensively.

With a lighter on each side of her the *Tillie* was loaded in about six hours, and we put to sea late in the afternoon, heading east-southeast to keep well clear of the shore and prevent them from getting our direction from the light-

house, where the ship was so well known that she would have been recognized at a glance. There was a revenue cutter lying at New London, and we feared she would try to pick up our trail as soon as the patient detectives discovered that the arms which they were expecting in New York had taken another course. During the night the *Tillie* began to leak, but the chief engineer, William H. Mears, failed to notify me, as he should have done. It was his theory, he claimed, that as the vessel had been in dry-dock long enough to get thoroughly dried out, the strain of her cargo had opened some of her seams, and he supposed they would tighten up as soon as her timbers expanded under the action of the water, and that until then the pumps could handle the leakage. But the water did not seep in through started seams; it poured in through the sleeve of the tail-shaft.

There were two theories as to the cause of the leak. The correct one, as I believed, was that there was a fracture in the collar of the shaft when the *Tillie* left the dry-dock; it was not disturbed when she loafed up through the Sound, in comparatively smooth water and with nothing on board; but as soon as she got into the seaway outside with her heavy cargo and was run at full speed, the broken pieces were forced apart, creating a crack through which the sea came in a small river. The other explanation was that we had a traitor aboard who, during

the night, drove wedges in between the sleeve of the shaft and the timbers. There were some circumstances which tended to support this belief, yet I never accepted it.

When I discovered on Sunday morning that something was wrong, the water was over the shaft, and it was too late to make any investigation; besides, there were other things of more importance that needed to be done, for even then the water was beginning to splash the fires out. The pumps were losing ground every minute, and it was plain enough that the ship was bound for the bottom of the sea; it was only a question of whether she sank in deep or shallow water. I immediately hauled her around and headed for Long Island in the hope that we could keep her going until I could run her ashore. It was then blowing hard from the southeast, so we had the wind with us to start with; but from the looks of things I knew it would be only a few hours until we ran into a hard northwester.

In an effort to keep the fires above the rapidly rising water I ordered the cargo thrown overboard; when I thought of how much the Spanish minister at Washington would have enjoyed seeing the bundles of rifles and boxes of cartridges sending up bubbles, I fervently wished we had him on board—but not for that reason alone. The wonderful dynamite-gun, in which so many hopes had been centered, was held until the last, and when it went overboard I turned

my back; I could not bear to see it go. In spite of all we could do to lighten the ship, the water gained on us. When it finally put out the fires we kept some steam up for a while by burning waste soaked in oil, but by noon, when we were within a few miles of the shore, the water was so far above the grate-bars that it was impossible to keep anything alight under the boilers. After that it was simply a case of trusting to Providence.

About the time the last little fire was snuffed out the wind backed around into the northwest and blew us straight out to sea. The change in the wind dismissed any thought we might have had of taking to the boats, though in the sea that was running it would have been a miracle if they had lived long enough to carry us halfway to the shore. In half an hour it was blowing a living gale, and bitter cold. Every few minutes a big comber swept the helpless ship from stem to stern, and our clothes were so stiff that holes were broken in them as we moved around to keep from freezing to death. Captain Berry, who should have set an example to his crew, added to the strain on our taut nerves by continually whining like a baby.

"What is the matter with you, anyway?" I asked him, after he had made an exhibition of himself that set some of the others to weeping.

"I've got a wife and two children at home," he blubbered.

"Then I'm three times worse off than you are," I told him, "for I've got the best wife in the world and eight children. It looks as if they are going to have to get along without me from this time on, but crying about it isn't going to help them, and it certainly won't do me any good. They would be ashamed of me if they thought I showed myself a coward. Try to be a man for a change; you'll feel better about it."

That shot, intentionally brutal but none the less true, took some of the hysteria out of Berry, and thereafter he added less to the brine that was coming aboard, though he was far from cheerful. We looked in vain for another craft of any kind, and by the middle of the afternoon it seemed as though it was all up with us, for there was not much daylight left, and with her deck almost awash it was impossible that the *Tillie* could keep afloat all night. The gale had swept us out to sea so rapidly that by that time we were fifteen miles offshore, midway between Fire Island and Shinnecock light. The wind, which was filled with icy needles, had kicked up a wild cross-sea, and it was more comfortable to go down with the ship than to even think of trying to escape in the boats.

Just as I had practically given up hope the *Governor Ames* hove in sight, tearing up the coast to windward of us under double-reefed lower sails. I knew it was the *Ames* as soon as I got a good look at her, for she was then the

only five-masted schooner in the world. I have always been partial to wind-jammers and have seen many that aroused my admiration, but the *Ames* impressed me as by all odds the most beautiful ship I had ever seen. There was a fine scorn in the way she stood up to the fury of the storm and defiantly shook off the tumbling mountains that threw their whole weight against her stout sides in an effort to crush them and bury her.

We were so low in the water, and she was so far away, that I feared she would not see us. She would have missed us, in fact, but for the good eyes of the negro engineer of her donkey engine, who was admiring the picture of the wild sea when he picked us up. He called the captain's attention to what he took to be a large rowboat away off to leeward, with the result that, when the schooner was abeam of us and it looked as though she was going by, she suddenly changed her course and bore down on us.

There probably would have been two wrecks instead of one if she had tried to get at close quarters with us, so it was necessary for us to take to the boats and get well clear of the *Tillie* before we could be picked up. The steamer carried only two boats, one large and the other small. They would have held all of us; but two cowardly sailors, who were the strongest men in the party, jumped into the small one and cut it adrift before we could stop them and

rowed to the schooner. There were twenty-one of us left, which was more than the other boat could carry. Under such conditions I naturally expected to stay with the ship and proposed to the others that they draw lots to decide who should go in the boat; but John, the steward, and seven of the Cubans refused to leave the steamer. They insisted that they would rather risk their lives where they were than to attempt to reach the schooner. No argument could change their decision, so the rest of us clambered or fell into the boat and let the wind sweep us away from the doomed ship.

The *Ames* stood in for us twice, and hove to only a short distance away; but we did not have strength enough to pull alongside of her; we were so exhausted by our efforts to keep the *Tillie* afloat and benumbed by the cold that it was all we could do to bail enough water out of the boat to prevent it from sinking. Seeing our helpless condition, Captain Waldemar, who commanded the schooner, determined to sink or save us. He stood straight for us, and, when we were close aboard, dropped all of his canvas except a couple of jibs. The schooner had so much way on that in a moment her bowsprit was directly over our heads. Even then, with the wind helping us, we could not pull to leeward of her. It seemed a certainty that we would be run down; but just in the nick of time the ship paid off a trifle, under the

pressure of the jibs, and went to leeward of us.

A line was thrown to us from her bow, but the Cuban who caught it was unable to hold it. As we were being swept under her stern another line was thrown into the boat. I jumped and caught it, took a turn around a thwart, and it held. Then we made ropes fast to ourselves and were hauled aboard. Most of us had to be lifted over the rail and fell on the deck almost senseless from complete exhaustion.

When they saw that we had reached the schooner, the men who had refused to leave the *Tillie* signaled that they wished to be taken off. Captain Waldemar refused to order a boat away, but called for volunteers. The second mate and four men responded, and after a fight with the sea, which fifty times it seemed they had lost, they rescued four of the men, which was all their boat would carry. They had expected to return for the others, but by the time they finally got back to the schooner they were as exhausted as ourselves. The mate, who was a big, strapping fellow and as hard as iron, fell in a faint as soon as he was landed on deck, and it was two hours before he regained his senses. It was dark by the time the rescuing party reached the *Ames*, and the captain would not allow another boat to leave the ship, even had there been any volunteers foolhardy enough to attempt another trip.

It was a terrible thing to have to sail away and leave the four men—the steward and three Cubans—on the *Tillie*, knowing, as they did, that she would go down before morning and take them with her; but that is the way of the sea. If they had not declined to leave the steamer when they had the opportunity, I doubtless would have taken the place of one of them in "Davy Jones's Locker."

The *Ames* reached Providence, whither she was bound when she providentially crossed our drifting course, on Tuesday, and we returned to New York by the first train. When we reported to Mr. Palma at the Astor House that evening, he went into hysterics. He had some excuse, it must be admitted, for, with our clothes torn into ribbons and grime and grease from the engine-room, where we had fought to keep steam up until the last minute, ground into our skin, and with our hands and faces cut and scarred, we undoubtedly were a hard-looking lot. After the story of the disaster had been told I went home to my anxious family, while Horatio Rubens took the rest of the survivors to an uptown hotel for dinner, where they attracted much attention, as the afternoon papers had contained long accounts of the loss of the *Tillie*. Every one concerned was careful not to admit that we had been on a filibustering expedition; and, as all of the evidence which might have been used against us was at the bottom of the

sea, there were no legal proceedings following that unfortunate trip to add to our troubles.

The sinking of the *Tillie* involved a heavy drain on the revolutionary treasury, which was never at all overburdened with money; but it was not nearly so disastrous to the Cuban cause as it would have been a year before, for the sympathy of the American people was running strongly in our favor, the Spaniards were becoming disheartened, and the situation, for us, was more encouraging than it had been at any time since the war began. After having landed so many expeditions without any serious accident, it was not surprising that we should lose one, and we considered it only a temporary reverse. It had none of the discouraging aspects of the repeated marine disasters, bought with Spanish gold, which marked the opening of the war, for there was not one of us who was not convinced that the last stage of the long struggle had been reached, though none of us suspected how quickly the end would come or the manner of it.

Good news sometimes follows on the heels of bad, and within a few days after the *Tillie* went down Mr. Palma received word, through one of our secret channels, that a messenger was on his way to New York with an important document which he would be able to use to great advantage. When the anxiously awaited Cuban arrived it developed that he bore a letter written by Dupuy de Lome, the Spanish minister at Wash-

ington, to a friend at Havana, in which he spoke of President McKinley as "a low politician." This document, which had fallen into the hands of the Cubans in a manner that made it appear to be a gift from the gods, was rightly regarded as more valuable ammunition than ship-loads of dynamite or car-loads of guns, for it required no prophetic vision to discern the effect its publication would produce.

First and foremost, it assured us of more kindly consideration at the one Spanish stronghold on which we had been unable to make any impression—the White House at Washington. Instead of having "catered to the rabble," as was charged by De Lome, Mr. McKinley had maintained an attitude that was absolutely correct from the standpoint of international law, though extremely incorrect, as I believed, for the President of the greatest republic on earth. He had never evinced the slightest sympathy for the Cubans, in public or private, and had exerted all of the forces at his command to prevent assistance from reaching them. To influential members of his own party who had urged him to intervene in Cuba, to put an end to wholesale murder and countless Spanish brutalities within sight of the American flag, he had repeatedly declared that he "would not be forced into an unholy war." Having taken such a decided stand against the growing sentiment of his country, we knew the vulgar criticisms of De

Lome would deeply wound his pride, which is a vulnerable point with most men, even though they are strong enough to be moved in no other way.

It was equally easy to foresee the effect of this momentous communication on the general public. Beyond their patriotic impulses the people of all parties felt a personal affection for McKinley that has been shown but few Presidents, and, whether or not they agreed with his pro-Spanish policy, they never would stand it to have him abused by the diplomatic representative of any European power, and least of all by the minister from Spain. We all believed that letter would result in the anticipated American intervention, as it undoubtedly would have done if the blowing-up of the *Maine*, which quickly followed, had not given the United States a much stronger though less valid reason for anger. The De Lome document was made public on February 8th, and it produced the expected effect; but before popular indignation had time to crystallize the incident was forgotten in the excitement over the calamity at Havana.

Under such encouraging conditions it would never do to let the fight lag, and within a week plans were being made to send out another expedition. One thousand rifles, with the usual accompaniments, were started from Bridgeport for Tampa, but were intercepted at Callahan and switched over to Fernandina, from which

point we were to start. General Nuñez, Cartaya, and I went to Jacksonville, where we ran into an unusually large force of Spanish spies and Secret Service operatives. Our continued success, in spite of all they could do to block us, had driven the Spanish agents to desperation, and they were literally throwing money away by the handful in their efforts to gain some information as to our plans. On the other hand, Mr. McKinley was most anxious that nothing should happen to lend color to De Lome's bitter complaint just as he was demanding from Spain an adequate apology for the minister's statements. To that end every one connected with the Federal government had been instructed to exercise the greatest care to prevent filibustering, and the stars of the Secret Service had been assigned to watch us.

It was in anticipation of just such precautions as these that the arms had been ordered shipped to Tampa, where a dozen detectives were hopefully looking forward to their arrival. The sleuths supposed we intended to start from the west coast, and we carefully fostered that belief. When all was ready General Sanguilly, who it had been duly whispered around was to command the landing force, and a party of Cubans started, with apparent secrecy, for Tampa. At the same time Nuñez, Cartaya, and I went into retirement. The detectives took it for granted that we had gone to join

Sanguilly by another route, and made a mad rush for Tampa. While they were prowling around there, on the evening of February 12th, we quietly proceeded to Fernandina, along with the Cubans who were to land with the arms, by the old trick of an unlighted train and a blind siding at the Florida Central and Peninsular depot in Jacksonville. At the same time the *Dauntless*, in command of "Jim" Floyd, dropped lazily down the river. It fortunately happened that there was a thick fog that night, and under its cover she stopped at Floyd's home and took on the twelve-pounder and other arms which we did not have time to land at Cape Lucrecia before we were driven away by a gunboat.

Lustily blowing her fog-horn, the revenue cutter *McCullough* was slowly patrolling the mouth of the river, on the lookout for the *Dauntless*. She was right in the channel, and Floyd, who was running at full speed and showing no lights, passed within one hundred feet of her as he went out. There was great excitement on the cutter when the *Dauntless* went tearing by at such close quarters; but she was lost in the fog in a moment, and no attempt was made to follow her. We made quick work of putting the cargo aboard when she reached Fernandina, and got away that night. On the afternoon of February 15th we landed half of the arms and men just inside of Point Nuevas

Grande, a short distance east of Nuevitas, at almost the exact spot where we had put an expedition ashore eight months previously.

On the night of February 16th, a little more than twenty-four hours after the explosion on the *Maine*, the remainder of our cargo was landed inside of the harbor at Matanzas. Considerable caution was necessary, for we went so close to the city that Cartaya saw the home of his parents and pointed it out to me. General Carlos Rojas, who was in command of the rebels in that district, was hard pressed by General Molina, the Spanish commander, and he had told us just where to land the arms so that he would be sure to get them. The point he had indicated was midway between a fort at the mouth of the Canimar River and the lighthouse at the entrance to the harbor and not more than two miles from either of them. The first arc light in the city which came into view as we steamed slowly into the broad bay looked so much like the searchlight of a Spanish gunboat that I went full speed astern in a jiffy; but I soon saw my mistake and we went on in. The landing was quickly and quietly made, and we got away without having been seen, though with the glasses we could plainly see the soldiers at the fort and people moving about in the city.

As we did not wish to embarrass President McKinley by furnishing any evidence, through our presence on board of her, that the *Dauntless*

had been away on a filibustering expedition, Nuñez, Cartaya, and I, with Pagluchi, Carillo, and four others of our staff, were put ashore at Bahia Honda, one of the Florida keys thirty miles east of Key West, which we were supposed to have reached in a rowboat after a coasting schooner had gone down under us. The *Dauntless*, with only her regular crew aboard, went on to Jacksonville, with a story of having been out in search of a wreck. On February 26th, after Floyd had had time to reach Jacksonville and make his explanation, we rowed out to meet the *City of Key West*, which was on her way from Miami to Key West, and were taken on board. The first thing we asked for was news.

"There is a commission sitting at Havana to investigate that thing, and it looks like war," replied the captain.

"What thing?" we asked, in chorus.

"That's so, you don't know; the *Maine* was blown up ten days ago."

"Then our expeditions are ended," quietly remarked Cartaya, who was the first to give voice to what was in all of our minds. None of us believed the Spaniards were in any way responsible for the destruction of the battleship, for we gave them credit for more sense than that; but we knew they would be blamed for it, and that American intervention would soon follow.

When the *Dauntless* reached Jacksonville it was

learned that the *Vesuvius* had been out searching for her, on the belated report of Spanish agents that she had left Fernandina with an expedition. She was seized by the government two weeks later, but it was purely a perfunctory proceeding, and her bond was released soon after war was declared against Spain. We did not use her again, as we were well satisfied to let matters between the United States and Spain take their natural and inevitable course; to have continued our activity might easily have weakened the position of the Administration at Washington. When we resumed the fight for Cuba it was with the American flag flying over us, and under it we found situations as stirring as any we had-experienced when we were operating in defiance of a tyrannical law and without any recognized flag. Strange as it may seem, I could see no difference, for the real principle involved seemed to me to have undergone no change.

XIII

UNDER MY OWN FLAG

IMMEDIATELY following the declaration of war against Spain by the United States, on April 20, 1898, Mr. Palma placed the services of the Cuban revolutionary organization at the disposal of the War Department, and they were accepted. Our familiarity with the Cuban coast and intimate knowledge of general conditions on the island were recognized as important factors, and we co-operated in the shipment of arms and supplies to the points where they were most needed. Very soon after the war began Cartaya was assigned to the *Gussie*, an old side-wheeler that was used as a transport. I might have gone with him in command of the craft, but it was decided, largely through sentiment, I imagine, that I should take charge of the *Alfredo*, the first war-ship of the Cuban navy, then building at Morris Heights, and I was ordered to New York to expedite her completion.

Thus I missed the first landing of American troops in Cuba and the first land battle of the war. It is one of the mistakes of history that the landing of General Shafter's soldiers at

Daiquiri and the quickly following battle of Las Guasimas are generally recorded as the first of the war, though this engagement did not occur until the latter part of June. Until the War Department could carry out its plans for landing an army in Cuba its policy was to strengthen the hands of the rebels. To this end the *Gussie* was loaded with arms and supplies for General Pedro Diaz, then in command in Pinar del Rio province, who had been advised of their coming. A full company of the Eighth Infantry, in command of Captain Joseph E. Dorst of the Fourth Cavalry, was sent along to cover the landing. The *Gussie* was convoyed by the revenue cutter *Manning*, one of our former enemies. On May 12th she steamed close inshore near the entrance to Cabañas Bay, forty-five miles west of Havana, to land couriers who were to summon General Diaz. From the ship the coast seemed perfectly clear; but twenty men were sent ashore to guard against a surprise. They were followed by the three couriers—Charles Thrall, Hayden Jones, the artist-correspondent for a New York newspaper, and a Cuban—and their horses. As the horses were being landed a detachment of Spanish soldiers opened fire on the infantrymen from a clump of bushes not more than a hundred feet away, where they had been well hidden. Without waiting for a command the Americans spread out in open order and charged the bush.

At the first puff of smoke Captain Dorst and Cartaya jumped into a boat and rowed ashore. Their boat struck a reef and upset, but they swam to the beach, getting there just in time to meet the soldiers coming out of the woods. They had killed Lieutenant Sotero Picaza, who was in command of the Spaniards, and several of his men, and driven the rest of them off on the run in short order. Only one American, who was a correspondent for a San Francisco newspaper, was injured, and he was not seriously wounded. The undaunted couriers set out in search of General Diaz, but before they found him Thrall and Jones were captured by a Spanish force commanded by Major Paramo and sent to Cabañas fortress at Havana. They were repeatedly and solemnly assured that they would be shot, but they had good nerve and refused to worry about it. Likewise, they declined to betray themselves. They insisted that they were newspaper men in search only of news, and on that ground they were released, after a detention that seriously disturbed the peace of mind of their friends.

The *Alfredo* was a centerboard sloop with a gasolene-engine, built to carry a load of nine tons and draw only five feet of water. It had been intended to use her in landing arms along the coast west of Nuevitas, where reefs and keys, which make out into the Bahama Channel for fifteen miles, prevented the *Dauntless* from

getting anywhere near the shore, while the distance was too great to be covered with the big dories that were ordinarily used in landing cargoes. Her filibustering purpose disappeared, before she was completed, with the blowing-up of the *Maine*; but it was concluded to take her to Key West and use her, under direction of the War Department, in communicating with points along the Cuban coast which vessels of ordinary draught could not approach. I attended her launching, and, small as she was, I confess it was with some pride that I hoisted the Cuban flag over her in an American port. She was the first vessel built by the Cuban republic and the first to fly its emblem. The newspapers had a lot of fun with her on account of her size; but she was a good, stanch craft and perfectly suited to the purpose for which she was built, for I drew the plans myself. I left New York with her on June 22d, and made an easy passage to Jacksonville, where we were given an enthusiastic reception. There I received orders to leave her and go to Tampa to take command of the *Wanderer*. After the close of the war Cartaya took the *Alfredo* to Havana, where she was laid up. Many people tried to buy her, but the Cuban government refused to sell her and allowed her to fall to pieces.

The *Wanderer* was a twin-screw fruiter from New Orleans which had been chartered by the army transport service. She was loaded at

Tampa with a lot of arms and ammunition, including stacks of machetes, provisions, and old clothes, which were to be landed at the mouth of the Manimani River, ten miles west of Bahia Honda, on the north coast of Pinar del Rio, where there was a large force of Cubans who were in need of both food and fighting materials. The clothing consisted almost entirely of heavy garments which could not be worn for a minute in Cuba, at any season of the year, without excessive discomfort. They were altogether devoid of value, for the natives could not even trade them for rum; but we were ordered to take them, and explanations as to the climate of Cuba received no attention from the grave bureau chiefs at Washington. If Americans would look at the map before they send their discarded winter clothing to starving natives in tropical countries, they would save themselves much misguided trouble.

It was not anticipated that we would have any difficulty in landing the cargo, for even then the Spaniards realized that they were no match for the Americans and were preparing to give up the fight, though the peace protocol was not signed until nearly a month later; but Lieutenant John W. Heard, of the Third Cavalry, and thirteen sharp-shooters were sent along to discourage any attempt to interfere with us. They found an unexpected opportunity to distinguish themselves, and Heard, who was a dashing young

Mississippian, displayed as great bravery as I have ever witnessed.

We raised the mouth of the Manimani early in the morning of July 23d. The reefs at that point extend so far out to sea that it was necessary to get inside of them to put the cargo ashore, so we sounded our way in, taking the precaution, as in the old filibustering days, to buoy the channel as we went along with grate-bars and empty boxes. There was deep water almost up to the beach, and we went to within less than half a mile of the shore before coming to an anchor. The expectant Cubans were congregated on the west bank of the Manimani, and we proceeded to land our cargo there in the ship's boats. So far as we could make out with the glasses there was not a Spaniard in sight. We knew there was a large fort at Bahia Honda, but we did not know that one hundred of the best marksmen stationed there had marched down during the night and concealed themselves in the bush a short distance back from the beach on the opposite side of the river from the Cubans. They had either secured advance information of our coming or had become suspicious, through the continued presence of so many natives, that they were looking for an expedition of some kind.

The Spaniards gave no hint of their nearness until late in the afternoon, by which time most of our shipment had been landed. Then they

suddenly opened a furious fire on the ship. In a moment it was made plain that their marksmanship was far above that of the average Spanish soldier. Their shots were perfect in alignment; but, fortunately for us, most of them were a little high. If the scoundrels had had our range as well as they had our direction, they would have made it very hot for us, and it was an unusually warm day to begin with. They riddled the smoke-stack and converted the metallic life-boats into sieves, and in five minutes the rigging was filled with "Irish pennants" where lines had been shot away.

Though taken completely by surprise, it was only a few seconds until Heard had his men pumping lead into the Spaniards in a way that would have made even a superannuated minister dance with joy. He directed them to lie down on the upper deck while he stood up and coolly surveyed the scene through his binoculars. The Spaniards were using smokeless powder, which made it difficult to locate them; but Heard picked them out in no time, and so well did he direct the fire of his men that in a few minutes we could see the Dons carrying their dead and wounded to the rear. Heard seemed to follow every shot, and told his men just where to place their bullets with the best chance of relieving the earth of some of its burdens. Except for the enjoyment which he displayed in a good fight, with the odds greatly against him, he was

as cool about it as though he had been on dress-parade at a two-company post in the Far West, and his men were no more excited. One of them had his cheek laid open with a Mauser bullet.

"I'd give a thousand dollars if I had that wound," shouted Heard, as he took his eyes away from his glasses long enough to shoot an envious glance at the injured marksman. Then he added: "Make 'em pay for that, boys. It will take just ten dead Spaniards to settle that account."

We were lying in a very narrow channel, and but for the fact that the *Wanderer* had two screws I doubt that we would ever have made our way out of it, for the tide was ebbing and the ship was headed toward the beach. At the pop of the first gun I ordered the anchor hove short, and when the firing settled down to a steady fusillade I ordered it up, and signaled the engine-room to stand by. "Billy" Ross, the second mate, was hurrying the men who were tending the windlass when a bullet smashed his knee, and he went down in a heap. At that the skipper of the ship, who was a fat Dutchman, threw himself flat on the deck and launched forth into an impassioned but incoherent prayer for help.

The men stuck to the windlass, however, and the anchor came up on the run. As soon as it was clear I signaled the engineer to go full speed

ahead on the starboard screw and full speed astern on the port, to bring her around quickly. By that time the bullets were coming aboard in increasing numbers, though most of them continued to go over our heads. One of them struck the starboard quartermaster in the back and grazed his spine. Whether from this injury or from fright, he became completely paralyzed, and I had to force his hands away from the spokes of the wheel. Before I had laid him down the port quartermaster was put out of commission by a bullet that grazed his nose, and I was left alone in the pilot-house. As I have said before, I am not large physically, and handling the wheel of the *Wanderer* was ordinarily a job for two men, but it fell to me, for by that time there was not a sailorman in sight.

A moment later the electrical signaling apparatus between the pilot-house and the engine-room was shot away. That was really serious, for unless I could communicate my orders to the engineer in rapid-fire order there was no chance that we would get away. With reefs close aboard of us on both sides, the running of one screw a fraction of a minute too long meant that we would be piled up on the rocks, to furnish an easy target for the Spaniards. Nothing could be expected from the regular crew of the ship, who were in a panic, so I shouted to Heard. He was quick to grasp the situation and its dangers, and told off two of his men to take the place

of the telegraph. One of them stood just outside of the pilot-house and shouted the orders to his partner, who passed them on down through the engine-room hatch. In a few minutes both of these men were shot down. Heard himself then jumped into the breach.

"That's a fine place," he shouted, gleefully. "Maybe I'll get shot too. I'll give 'em a chance, anyway."

He refused to order any one to assist him, and transmitted the orders alone. I would shout them to him, and he would run back to the hatch and pass them on to the engineer. As he ran back and forth the things he said about the Spaniards almost burned holes in the deck where his words fell. In this way we gradually worked our way out of the tight hole we were in, with the Spaniards and the rest of Heard's men persistently plugging away at each other until we were out of range. When the row began the men who were landing the cargo rowed out to sea, and we picked up their boats, as we went along, without stopping.

It was found, when we had time to look things over, that we had seven men who were seriously wounded, though none of them died, and several with minor injuries. We never knew how many Spaniards were put out of commission, for reinforcements arrived from the fort before we were out of sight, and all of the dead and wounded were carried away; but there was some satis-

faction in learning, later on, that a blood-stained general's hat was found on the field. While the fight was on between the ship and the shore the Cubans were busily engaged in tearing open the bundles of rifles and boxes of ammunition which had been landed. Thus equipped they took up the fight where we left off, and soon drove the Spaniards back to their fort.

In a war in which some men received more honor than was due them, while many instances of real, modest heroism were unnoticed by those higher in authority, it is a pleasure to record the fact that Heard's bravery was not allowed to go unrewarded. He was given a medal of honor "for most distinguished gallantry in action," and the scene of the battle was set aside as a United States Naval Reservation. Some of my friends have complained because my part in the affair was not recognized in some such manner as was Heard's; but there is no foundation for any such criticism, for at that time I was still in the Cuban service and was only indirectly connected with the War Department. At any rate, the man who goes through life looking for medals isn't going to get very many of them. If Heard had been thinking of that end of it, the chances are he would have been killed; certainly he wouldn't have honestly earned his reward.

As soon as we were clear of the reefs we headed up for the squadron that was blockading Havana

to secure surgical assistance. Night came on before we had covered half the distance, and the effectiveness of the blockade was indicated by the fact that we were twice held up by torpedo-boats before we reached the fleet. The little scouts were running without lights and making so little fuss that I failed to distinguish either one of them until they hailed us, which suggested one vital point of difference between American and Spanish naval methods. When we got up to the *San Francisco*, which was the flag-ship, Commodore Howell sent two surgeons aboard to attend our wounded, and one of them accompanied us to Key West, where those of our men who were severely injured were placed in the hospital. I was sent along to keep them company, with a bad case of fever which had been coming on for some time and hadn't been helped any by the strain of the preceding twenty-four hours; but I couldn't stay in the hospital with its depressing atmosphere, so in a day or two I was permitted to go to a hotel.

Two weeks later, after the *Wanderer* had failed to land the remainder of the cargo with which we had run away from the mouth of the Manimani, I again took command of her. We landed a lot of provisions at Caibarien, in Santa Clara province, where the natives were dying every hour from starvation. Those who were still alive were literally walking skeletons with frightfully distended abdomens. It was impossible

to prevent them from tearing open bags of beans and eating them raw, and no doubt some died from gorging themselves on uncooked food; but, on the other hand, the stores we put ashore saved hundreds, and probably thousands, of lives. The Spanish troops stationed at Caibarien were in little better shape than the Cubans. They offered no resistance to our landing, and were prepared to surrender to a Cuban force that was marching on the city and was only six miles away when we steamed on down the coast.

At Key Confites, in Puerto Principe, we landed General Dominguez Capote, vice-president of the provisional government, who had been in New York consulting with Mr. Palma, and put a lot of arms and ammunition ashore with him. It was only by a lucky chance that the Cuban republic had a vice-president at that time. For obvious reasons General Capote had taken passage for New York on a sailing-ship at an out-of-the-way port on the southern side of the island. The vessel was wrecked soon after she put out, and while all on board were rescued they were taken to Santiago, where there was a large Spanish garrison. Next to Havana that was the last place to which General Capote would have gone of his own accord. If the Spaniards had suspected that he was in the party they probably would have shot all of them, to make sure of putting him out of the way of making

more mischief; but, strange to say, he was not recognized, and was allowed to board a liner bound for New York.

The *Wanderer* was used in the transport service until September, when I took her to New Orleans and turned her over to her owners. I then returned to New York and left the Cuban service on October 10, 1898, by which time the war was over; the Spaniards were evacuating Cuba; the Americans were in charge of the government—with the hope of all of the intelligent Cubans that they would continue to supervise Cuban affairs for ten or fifteen years at least, by which time they expected to be capable of self-government—and there was no further need for my services.

There were many expressions of gratitude for what I had done for Cuba, which undoubtedly were sincere, and profuse promises of future rewards, which probably were well meant. I was also assured that a considerable balance which was due me for expeditions I had landed would be paid when the Cubans came into their own, or as soon as the money could be raised; but this debt has never been liquidated. This is stated in no spirit of complaint; I refer to it only because some people have believed that I profited largely through my Cuban connections. To be in all respects accurate, this record should show that it was with no thought of selfishness that I enlisted in the war for Cuban indepen-

dence. As a matter of fact, I would have been much better off financially if I had remained out of it. I went into it because I was in hearty sympathy with the principle for which the Cubans were fighting, and because I sought the adventure which the war promised, and I was not at all disappointed with the results. To the performance of my part I gave the best that was in me, and if there has been any display of ingratitude it is not my fault, nor am I concerned about it. Human nature is so constituted that filibustering for freedom is generally plethoric in promises but poverty-stricken in performances, and the man who engages in it with any other idea, unless he be more or less of a knave, is very likely to be fooled.

Soon after leaving the Cubans I was engaged to take the good ship *Brinckerhoff* to Havana, and this commission, through its unusual nature, attracted almost as much attention as any of the much more important things I had ever done. The *Brinckerhoff* was an old side-wheel ferryboat which had long been used between Jersey City and Brooklyn by the Pennsylvania Railroad. Having become too antiquated, and also too small, for that service, she was sold to a Cuban railroad for use between Havana and Regla, on the opposite side of the harbor. She had no upper cabins, and was so small when compared with the ferries that forced her out of New York Harbor, that she looked like an overturned row-

boat. To take her out to sea in the stormy season was regarded as the essence of recklessness, which may explain why I was asked to take command of her; but those who held this view failed to recognize her unique seaworthiness. I had the space reserved for teams bulkheaded at both ends, with the timbers running to a point, so no water could get down into the engine-room; and in the cabins, forward and aft of the paddle-wheel boxes, every alternate board was taken up, so that the waves could slosh up through the openings without danger of upsetting us. The crew, which I secured with considerable difficulty, consisted of a mate, two engineers, three firemen, a cook, and two sailors. We lived in the two pilot-houses, and the galley and mess-table were on the main-deck, between the bulkheads.

We cleared at the Custom-House, which was a ceremony so long neglected that I had almost forgotten the routine of it, on December 7th, but did not sail until a week later, as I refused to leave without a good fire-hose, which the craft lacked when she changed hands. The wisdom of this caution was soon demonstrated, for on the first night out, soon after we had raised Barnegat light, something went wrong with the electric-light wires, and they started a fire in one of the cabins. The flames were fanned by a heavy northwest wind, and but for the hose, which was taken along for just such an emergency, the old boat would have been destroyed in a very

short time. We did not get the fire out until it had done considerable damage, and I at once put back to New York for repairs. Every man jack on board, from the mate down, hustled ashore as soon as we anchored off Staten Island, and I had to get a complete new crew. When we started out again three weeks later, after the vessel had been repaired and provided with kerosene lights, the firemen developed frost-bitten feet, and we had to return and hunt up men to take their places.

We finally got away from New York on January 8, 1899. We left Norfolk, our first stop, in a howling southwester, and it blew so hard that we were obliged to heave to all of one night, as the head-sea was coming up under the wheel-guards in a way that threatened to tear the little boat to pieces. We were not at all uncomfortable, however, for the gale blew the vessel before it so rapidly that no seas came aboard. Before we reached Charleston, at which port I had intended to put in for coal, a norther struck us and swept us along almost to Miami, where we arrived with our bunkers bare.

The master mechanic for the railroad company that had bought the *Brinckerhoff* met us at Key West. He had expected to cross to Havana with us, but a living gale that was sweeping down from the north prompted him to change his plans and make the trip in the *Olivette*. We left Key West two hours ahead of the liner, and

were only a couple of hours behind her in reaching Havana the next morning. The gale gave the *Olivette* a shaking up that those aboard of her remembered for a long while. All of her crockery was smashed, and our master-mechanic friend was thrown out of his bunk and so badly bruised that he had to go into dry-dock for several days. The *Brinckerhoff* rode the storm out like a duck. Her wide wheel-guards prevented her from rolling, and, with the wind dead astern, we hardly knew it was blowing. All of which proved again that the big things are not always the best.

XIV

SOME INNER SECRETS

TO my mind the real story of how the *Maine* happened to be sent to Cuba is one of the most interesting of the unwritten chapters of the war, for, aside from its historical value, it illustrates the extent to which apparently trivial accidents sometimes serve great purposes and change the destinies of nations. If Colonel John Randolph Caldwell, then Cuban correspondent for the New York *Herald*—who was subsequently appointed to the same position by the Associated Press—had not been in a hurry for some revolver cartridges, the famous battle-ship probably would not have been hurriedly and most unexpectedly despatched to Havana, her destruction in Spanish waters would have been averted, and the intervention of the United States to secure the independence of Cuba would have been based on other and more justifiable grounds.

To get his messages past the censor, who would allow nothing to go out over the cable which reflected on the government or favored the revolutionists, Colonel Caldwell devised an exceed-

ingly ingenious cryptogram code by which all important happenings were transmitted in the form of seemingly innocent messages of a more or less personal nature. Every code message contained a word which indicated that it was in cipher, and two key-words which, when applied to a chart in the *Herald* office, conveyed one of several hundred arbitrary messages which covered every important development that could ensue. The relative positions of the key-words, which were always within the first twenty words of the despatch, gave the essence of the news, which could be modified, if necessary, by the manner of phrasing the remainder of the message. This code was used only for the transmission of matter which the censor would not pass; routine news, to which no objection could be made, was sent in plain English. All of these messages were cabled to Key West, where they were relayed to New York.

Early in January, 1898, there were serious riots in Havana following the farcical inauguration of the so-called autonomous government through which Captain-General Blanco hoped to restore peace, but which was as distasteful to most of the Spaniards as it was to the Cubans. The Spanish residents of Cuba had no sympathy with Blanco's pacific policy, which they construed to be an evidence of weakness. They preferred the more brutal but also more effective methods of Weyler, and their disapproval

of Blanco's pet scheme was expressed in a series of disturbances which threatened to result in a rebellion within the Spanish section of the population, and even among the troops. The Americans living in Cuba became thoroughly alarmed, and Consul-General Fitzhugh Lee was urged to request the State Department to have a war-ship sent to Havana to protect them.

The same plea had been made to him many times before, though never quite so insistently as in this latter instance. Every one knew a war-ship would be despatched to Havana the moment General Lee called for it, but he declined to make the request, as he had assurances from General Blanco which convinced him that Americans were in no danger. At the solicitation of Spain no United States naval vessel had visited Cuban waters during the war, and General Lee well knew that to send a war-ship to Havana at that time would be like waving a red flag at an angry bull.

While the riots were in progress José Congosto, the new secretary-general of Cuba—the same man who, when consul at Philadelphia, had tried to bribe me to betray the Cubans—called on General Lee at his rooms in the Inglaterra Hotel to implore him to prevent a war-ship from being sent to Havana. Freeman Halstead, a daredevil Canadian newspaper man who worked for Caldwell, had rooms adjoining those of General Lee on the third floor of the hotel. The two

suites were separated by old-fashioned sliding doors which "leaked" so all that was said by Congosto and General Lee was overheard.

Congosto, who was next in rank to the captain-general, asserted that the disturbances were the work of Spaniards who were opposed to the pacificatory policy of General Blanco, and urged that the United States should support this policy, as, according to his belief, it promised peace. He told of some anti-American threats which had been heard in the mobs, but said they came from irresponsible persons and no attention should be paid to them. Blanco, he said, had ordered into the city a force of regular troops which would quickly suppress the disorders. The only danger, as he saw it, was that an American war-ship might be sent down to complicate matters. This, he said, in the disturbed situation, might so enrage the Spanish element that really serious results would follow, and he begged that such a possibility be prevented.

"As matters stand now," he said, "we can control the situation without difficulty, and I pledge you not only my honor, but my life, that not a hair on the head of a single American will be injured. But I implore you not to allow a war-ship to be sent here."

"I believe you," replied General Lee, "and you need fear no American interference. No warship will be sent here unless I ask for it, and at present I have no such intention."

Congosto departed greatly relieved, and it is only fair to say that he kept his promise not only to put down the riots, but to protect Americans and their interests. The truth is that the Americans in Cuba were never in any danger, and no one knew this better than General Lee, for it was in considerable degree due to his forcefulness that this was true. Despite their fears they were actually more secure, with regard to both their lives and property, than any other foreigners on the island. The Cubans considered them their best friends, and the Spaniards, with American intervention hanging over their heads like the sword of Damocles, feared to do anything which might offend them. They knew that, while General Lee was extremely fair, he would stand no foolishness; likewise, they understood that a word from him would be answered by an American war-ship, squadron, or fleet, and that but little provocation was needed to destroy Uncle Sam's last bit of patience with Spanish misrule in the sorely stricken Pearl of the Antilles.

So well was this situation recognized that about this time several impulsive Cubans conceived the idea of setting off a bomb in General Lee's room at the Inglaterra some evening when they were sure he was out of the hotel, to make it appear that the Spaniards had tried to assassinate him. It was expected this would so anger the American public that they would insist on immediately taking a hand in Cuban affairs.

The plan could have been worked without any trouble, for a window in the consul-general's bedroom opened on the roof of the adjoining building, from which escape would have been easy; but, after it had been much talked about in secret for several days and all of the details arranged, it was abandoned for the same reason that a scheme to murder General Weyler had been given up some months before: it was feared it would have "a bad moral effect."

During all of the time he was in Havana, Weyler went nearly every evening to the Café Jerezano, at the corner of Virtudes Street and the Prado, where he sat out on the sidewalk in plain view of the passing crowds for several hours. He was usually accompanied by only one aide, which proved that he had no lack of personal courage. At about eleven o'clock every night he drove down Obispo Street to the palace. Obispo is one of the narrowest streets in the city, and it would have been a simple matter to drop a bomb on the captain-general's carriage from the roof of almost any building on either side of it, with every assurance that it would do its work well and that the man who threw it would escape. Weyler knew that plots against his life were constantly being hatched; but he seemed to have no fear that any one of them would succeed. One night a bomb was set off in his palace by a daring young Cuban named Armando

Andre; but it was such a small affair that it merely mussed up a wash-room.

Following the interview between General Lee and Congosto and the suppression of the riots there was a period of comparative quiet. The strengthened force of regulars preserved good order in the city, and all need for a war-ship appeared to have vanished. Some timid Americans, who had given up all hope of stampeding the imperturbable consul-general, were sending perfervid appeals to Washington for protection; but General Lee was as determined as ever not only that he would not ask for a war-ship, but that none should be sent except over his protest, so long as General Blanco had things so well in hand. In the mean time Colonel Caldwell, on a trip into the field, had lost his revolver, and, as it was impossible to buy arms in Havana, he had written the home office to send him another one. It was delivered to him on January 23d by the purser of the *Olivette*, which ran between Key West and Havana. It was of the same caliber as the weapon he had lost, but of a different make, and after the steamer had started on her return trip he discovered that his old cartridges did not fit the new revolver. Not wishing to wait three days to send another letter, and unwilling to let the Spaniards know that he always went armed, he cabled the *Herald* the message which started all the trouble. It read:

Camera received, but no plates. Requires special size. Send by next boat.

This was plain enough to the cable editor of the *Herald*, but the agent at Key West, through whose hands all messages passed, jumped at the conclusion that it was a cryptogram, though it carried no code word, and, through sheer inquisitiveness, attempted to decipher it. After wrestling with it for several hours he evolved the wonderful and momentous translation that an attempt had been made by Spaniards to assassinate General Lee. This was soon whispered around Key West, and in a few hours it was reported through government channels to Washington, where it was at once communicated to Assistant Secretary of State William R. Day.

Despite the fact that the *Herald* printed no story of the alleged attempt at murder, and that nothing concerning it was received from General Lee, full credence was placed in the report by the Washington authorities, and at a meeting of the cabinet on the following day it was decided to send the battle-ship *Maine* to Havana at once "on a visit of courtesy." This precipitate action, based on an unconfirmed rumor, can be explained in no other way than on the theory that the President and his advisers temporarily lost their heads. They supposed General Lee either unduly minimized the importance of the incident or had been prevented from sending

the State Department word of the attempt on his life, and they had received so many appeals from nervous Americans in Havana that they decided it would be unwise to take any more chances with the Blanco administration.

Secretary of the Navy John D. Long paved the way for the *Maine's* visit by a statement, given out on the afternoon of January 24th, in which he said: "The condition of affairs in Cuba is now such that United States naval vessels can resume the custom of making friendly calls at Cuban ports." Inasmuch as the situation in Cuba was unchanged, this was obviously diplomatic language of the sort that is intended to conceal facts; furthermore, it was strikingly contradicted by the lack of ceremony with which orders were issued for the first of the "friendly calls"; but some public explanation was necessary, and Mr. Long's excuse probably was the best that could be made.

On the very day that Mr. Long's statement was given out the *Maine*, which had been lying at Key West for more than a month in readiness to respond to any call from General Lee, had proceeded to Dry Tortugas in company with Rear-Admiral Sicard's squadron. The order for this movement had been telegraphed from Washington on the day before, January 23d, at which time it was considered that the continued presence of the battle-ship at Key West was an unnecessary annoyance to Spain. In the even

ing of the 24th a torpedo-boat was rushed from Key West to the Tortugas with orders to the *Maine* to proceed to Havana at once "to make a friendly visit for the protection of American citizens, and to afford them an asylum if necessary."

The first word of this reached Havana on the afternoon of the 24th, through the following despatch, sent by the *Herald* to its correspondent:

Kindly send story and pictures ordered on food supply. We want it for the main sheet within a few days.

Translated, the code part of this message, which was confined to the first sentence, read: "A United States war-ship has been ordered to Havana." The second sentence explained that it was the *Maine*, and that she could be expected within a few days. Caldwell hunted up General Lee and told him of the information he had received. Lee did not believe it. He said he had not asked for a war-ship, and he was sure none would be sent without a request from him. "Your informant is mistaken," he said. "We may have the *Maine* or some other ship here one of these days, but certainly not for the present."

Caldwell, however, expressed full confidence in the correctness of his despatch. As General Lee was dressing the next morning he was astounded to see the *Maine* steaming into the harbor. Going down to the dining-room, he found

Caldwell at breakfast. He walked over to him and said very gravely: "You were right last night, after all. The *Maine* has just entered the harbor. I saw her pass the Morro ten minutes ago." She had been despatched in such frantic haste that no intimation had been sent to Lee, and he had consequently been unable to advise General Blanco of her expected arrival.

It is doubtful if any other war-ship ever paid a "friendly call" under such warlike conditions. Captain Sigsbee did not know how he would find things when he entered the harbor; but, from all that had happened and from the nature of his orders, he expected trouble of some kind; so, wisely enough, he prepared for it. Arriving off Havana at daylight on January 25th, he first steamed slowly to the westward of the city to look over the new and powerful batteries out toward Vedado, and he was so close inshore that the officers could be seen studying the fortifications through their glasses. Then he went to the eastward and made the same careful survey of the Playa Chivo battery that was in course of completion back of the Cabañas fortress.

The delay which this investigation entailed was explained with the diplomatic statement that the ship "was putting on a port appearance"; but, like the official declaration of Secretary Long, it was well understood. When the *Maine* finally entered the harbor her decks were cleared for action, her crew were at quarters, and

she was in complete readiness to fire explosive shells or a salute with blank cartridges. A pilot met her off the Morro and guided her to the buoy at which she was destroyed three weeks later. When she had made fast, salutes were exchanged and every requirement of naval etiquette was complied with; but the ceremonies ended there.

It is not for an American and an ardent Cuban sympathizer to question the wisdom of all of the precautions that were taken by Captain Sigsbee; but at this late day it involves no lack of patriotism to admit that there was some foundation for the Spanish contention that, as it was well known that none of the guns which he so carefully located could be brought to bear on a ship in the harbor, they savored somewhat of swashbuckling. It cannot be denied that the *Maine's* whole attitude was threatening rather than conciliatory; no doubt this was partly, and perhaps largely, due to the vague orders that were sent in such a hurry to her commander, for they were well calculated to cause apprehension.

So far as the officials and the greater part of the population were concerned, there never was a more unwelcome visitor; and the impression created by the manner of the battle-ship's arrival was heightened by what followed. The first of her officers who went ashore devoted themselves to inquiring into the condition of things in Havana, from a purely military standpoint.

They went as close to the forts as outsiders were permitted to go and drew plans of them, based on what they could see and such reliable information as they could secure. They investigated the city's water-supply, and when they found that it was brought in over a viaduct across the flat back of Regla, which was in plain sight through their glasses, they declared that they could "knock that to pieces in ten minutes." These inquiries naturally were confined to Americans and a few Cubans; but not all of them were judiciously made, and it was not long until the Spanish authorities knew of the questions that were being asked by the enthusiastic young naval officers. It was clear enough that the *Maine* expected war would soon ensue; but no one suspected that she alone would provoke it.

Notwithstanding the verdict of the Court of Inquiry and its endorsement by the commission which examined the wreck after it had been exposed by the construction of a coffer-dam, that the *Maine* was blown up by a Spanish mine, presumably with the knowledge and approval, if not by the order, of the highest officials on the island, I have always been firm in the conviction that she was destroyed by the accidental explosion of her forward magazine. This is also the opinion of practically all of the members of the inner council of the Cuban Revolutionary Committee. Captain-General Blanco and his staff, though they were angered by her presence,

uninvited and unannounced, were the last people on earth who would have injured the *Maine* or allowed her to be injured. They recognized that they were responsible for her safety. American intervention was the one thing they were most anxious to avert—and they never were quite so solicitous in that regard as just at that time, when they professed to believe, and probably really did believe, that the suppression of the revolt was close at hand—and they knew that the surest way to bring it about was to show some discourtesy to the white war-ship. To suppose that the Spanish element which was opposed to General Blanco could have placed a mine under the *Maine* and set it off without the knowledge of the port authorities is ridiculous. Beyond that, our spy system within the palace of the captain-general and throughout the Spanish organization was so complete that, if the Spaniards had had any hand in the historic tragedy or possessed any knowledge concerning it, the facts certainly would have been reported to us.

As to the exact cause of the disaster I do not assume to speak with authority, but my belief is that it was due either to an explosion of her boilers, which set off her magazines, or to deterioration of the powder for the forward ten and six inch guns, which produced a spontaneous explosion. The *Maine* carried the old brown powder, which was more liable to disintegration than the smokeless powder now in use; and at that

time the chemical changes which high explosives undergo under certain conditions were not nearly so well understood as they are to-day. The nitro compounds then in use as the essential constituents of powder were much less stable than the substances that are now used, and much more liable to spontaneous chemical decomposition under any circumstances at all unfavorable, such as excessive heat and variable atmospheric conditions. The *Maine* had been in tropical waters for some time, and her forward magazine was separated from her boilers only by a coal-bunker, twelve feet wide, extending across the ship. In such a situation it is quite conceivable that the powder reached a state that caused it to explode spontaneously, which I regard as more probable than that the boilers let go. The fact that a part of her keel near the magazine was blown upward, almost to the surface of the water, has never been accepted as good evidence that the ship was blown up by a mine by any one familiar with the unaccountable ways in which the forces of nitroglycerin explosions are often exerted.

It should be remembered, too, that the *Maine* and the *Texas* were the first battle-ships built by the Navy Department. The plans from which they were constructed were reported to have been stolen from England; but it is more likely that the British Admiralty was glad to give them away. Both vessels contained many defects,

which caused much severe criticism, and both were regarded as hoodoo ships. To what extent, if any, the structural shortcomings of the *Maine* contributed to her destruction I do not know; but my theory is that she happened to be the first big war-ship to suffer from powder decomposition. Several years later the magazine of a French battle-ship blew up from the same cause while she was lying in dry-dock, with no one aboard, and there have been other similar instances. As a result of these experiences greater precautions are now taken on all naval vessels, and the moment powder shows signs of deterioration it is thrown overboard.

The inquisitive blunder which caused the *Maine* to be sent to Havana was not the only fortuitous mishap that advanced the cause of the revolutionists. It was through another inquiring accident that the famous De Lome letter, which would have resulted in American intervention without the resentment born of destruction of Captain Sigsbee's historic ship, fell into the hands of the Cubans. This pleasing but unexpected development of a war that was filled with surprises has always been surrounded with mystery; but there is now no reason why the story should not be told.

The letter was written to José Canalejas, formerely minister of justice, and in recent years the powerful premier of Spain. In the fall of

1897, at which time he was editor of the Madrid *Heraldo*, he made a trip to Cuba, by way of New York and Washington, to secure first-hand information both as to public sentiment in the United States and the real state of the rebellion. While in this country he had several conferences with Enrique Dupuy de Lome, the Spanish minister, who promised to keep him advised as to developments at Washington. Soon after his arrival in Cuba he went into the field with the troops, and spent much time in Pinar del Rio, where a vigorous campaign was being conducted against Maceo. On his return to Havana he found that his secretary had been taken sick during his absence, and there was a mass of unopened mail awaiting him. He was in a hurry to get back to Spain, so he asked the editor of *El Figaro* to loan him a stenographer to help him with his correspondence.

Gustavo Escoto, a young Cuban clerk, was assigned to assist him. They were going through the stack of mail when a wealthy liquor dealer called to invite Canalejas to visit his place. He was insistent, and to get rid of him more quickly Canalejas stepped out into the hall to talk with him. In the moment that the door was closed Escoto picked up the next letter on the pile and opened it. It chanced to be a confidential communication from De Lome, in which, after severely criticizing President McKinley's policy, he spoke of him as "weak and catering to the

rabble; and, besides, a low politician." Recognizing the importance of this declaration and the use to which it might be put, Escoto slipped the letter into his pocket a second before Canalejas re-entered the room. Fortunately it had been sent in a plain envelope, so it had escaped the notice of Canalejas, and he finished with his correspondence and returned to Madrid with no suspicion that his most interesting communication had been intercepted. That letter was the only one he received which would have been of any value to the revolutionists; whether it was Providence, Fate, or Old Nick that placed it in Escoto's hands, out of the hundreds that were on the table in front of him, in the single brief period that he was unobserved, one guess is as good as another.

Escoto told the revolutionary committee in Havana of the prize he had captured, but refused to surrender it to them; he insisted on delivering the letter to Mr. Palma in New York. This involved some delay, for it was known that Escoto had acted temporarily as secretary for Canalejas, and while he was not regarded as an active sympathizer with the rebels, it would have aroused the suspicion of the secret police if he had attempted to leave Cuba at once. After enough time had elapsed so that his departure was unnoticed, he went to New York and proudly presented the stolen letter—the fruit of a most justifiable theft—to Mr. Palma.

It was given to the newspapers, which displayed it with all of the expected prominence, on February 8, 1898, and the original was placed in the hands of the President's old friend, William R. Day, Assistant Secretary of State, who was the actual head of the department, though John Sherman was the titular chief. On the following day Mr. Day called at the Spanish legation and confronted Mr. de Lome with the letter.

"Did you write this letter?" he asked.

"I did," replied De Lome, with hardly a glance at it, for he had seen it in the morning papers.

"Thank you," said Mr. Day, as he turned on his heel, without the formality of a bow, and walked out. He hurried back to the White House, and from there to the State Department, with the intention of sending the Spanish minister his passports, which, under the circumstances, would have been almost tantamount to a declaration of war; but before they could be made out and presented to him De Lome cabled his resignation to Madrid and left hurriedly for Canada. He remained there a short time, under guard of a squad of Pinkertons and also watched by Secret Service operatives, and then returned to Spain.

Mr. McKinley and his cabinet were made furiously angry by De Lome's false and bitter criticisms of his official attitude, and their resentment was intensified by the minister's uncere-

monious departure from Washington. Instructions were at once cabled to Stewart L. Woodford, the American minister at Madrid, to demand an instant apology from Spain for the words and actions of her diplomatic representative. This apology, though repeatedly called for in sharp notes, was not forthcoming until February 14th, and even at that late day it was purely perfunctory. There is reason to believe that this disclaimer would not have been accepted, and that further exchanges of notes on the subject would have led to a breaking-off of diplomatic relations with Spain, and the intervention for which the Cubans had been fighting and waiting; but the next day the *Maine* was blown up, and De Lome was forgotten.

Young Escoto, who had rendered his country such a valuable service, was subsequently disgraced, though probably through no fault of his own. He was appointed to a clerkship in the department of public instruction, in which a lot of crookedness was discovered during the second American intervention. Escoto, though his friends were certain of his innocence, was made the scapegoat, and ran away to Europe, where he remained until the general amnesty proclamation of President José Miguel Gomez left him free to return.

There had always been a mistaken belief, which was preached and complained of by the

Spaniards, that the American public contributed very largely to the Cuban cause, and that but for this assistance the revolt would have been stifled long before the *Maine* was blown up. Therefore it should be set down here that while my countrymen gave freely of their sympathy, which was fully appreciated and without which success would have been much more difficult, they contributed very little in cash. In their three and a half active years the Cuban delegations in the United States expended approximately $1,500,000, practically all of which passed through the hands of Mr. Palma. Of this amount Americans gave less than $75,000.

The largest American offering was $20,000 from Tammany Hall in the fall of 1897, at which time we were badly in need of funds with which to purchase arms and ammunition. "Cuba Libre" was being talked of with such encouraging enthusiasm that it threatened to become a political issue, and shrewd old "Dick" Croker, the boss of Tammany, concluded it would be the part of wisdom to extend substantial as well as sentimental aid. He sent word to the delegation, through one of our friends, that Tammany had "a little balance left over from the last election," and that if some of the Cuban chiefs would attend the next meeting of the executive committee it would be turned over to them. "But for Heaven's sake," was his parting message, "don't let them do any talking." Accord-

ingly Mr. Palma, Dr. Castillo, General Nuñez, and one or two others put on their best black clothes and attended the following meeting of the committee. They sat around with long faces, but spoke never a word. Mr. Croker reported the unexpended balance, and on his motion it was donated to the Cubans "for the aid of the sick and wounded," which was the stereotyped form for all such gifts.

It was the Cubans living in the United States who furnished most of the sinews of war. The patriotism they displayed and the sacrifices they made would be a credit to any people in any age of the world's history. Fully half of the revolutionary fund came from the clubs of Cuban cigar-makers that had been organized by José Marti in all cities having Cuban colonies. Their members were pledged to contribute ten per cent. of their weekly earnings; but most of them gave more than that, many as much as a quarter and a third, and even half of their wages. Tribute amounting to several hundred thousand dollars was levied on Spanish plantation-owners in Cuba; those who paid their taxes promptly, as all good citizens should, were not molested, but most of those who disregarded the assessment notices saw their fields of sugar-cane go up in smoke when they were ready to be cut.

In one way and another, Mr. Huau, the delegate at Jacksonville, contributed his whole fortune of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars to

the cause. There were many others who, with less to give, gave all they had. Juan Fraga, of Brooklyn, one of the earliest associates of Marti in building up the magnificent organization which made the long war possible, was one of those who sacrificed most. He had a prosperous business, but so neglected it in his devotion to his country that he died almost penniless, whereas he might have been wealthy. No one ever knew how much he gave, for his purse was always open; but it was a goodly fortune. Another of the same type was F. E. Fonseca, of New York. Like Mr. Fraga, he kept no record of his ceaseless contributions; but they easily amounted to fifty thousand dollars. He gave so much time to aiding the revolution and so little to his business that he narrowly escaped bankruptcy. Where there were so many who made noble sacrifices, without any thought of reward beyond the freedom of their native land, it may seem unfair to single out a few by name, yet these are only examples within my own knowledge of the spirit which animated thousands of Cubans.

The largest contributor of money, outside of Mr. Huau, was the revered Marta Abreu, who owned large estates in Santa Clara province but lived in Paris during the war. She responded liberally to every call that was made on her, and gave altogether more than one hundred thousand dollars. All of her contributions were made in the name of General Ignacio Agramonte, who was

killed in the Ten Years' War, and by her request the identity of the giver was not revealed until after her death, several years later. Her husband, Pedro Estavis, was appointed minister of justice in the cabinet of General Wood, in recognition of his wife's generosity and his own unassailable integrity. He was subsequently elected vice-president of Cuba, but resigned soon afterward on account of a disagreement with President Palma.

Bonds of the Cuban republic were offered for sale, away below par, all during the war; but few of them found purchasers. They were largely used, however, as part payment in the purchase of arms, at from twenty-five to sixty cents on the dollar. With the final establishment of the republic these bonds became as good as gold, and those who had accepted them profited proportionately, while many clever financiers regretted their failure to buy them when they were offered at bargain prices.

XV

A PLAN TO RESCUE DREYFUS

NONE of my adventures had brought me fortune, and the end of the war with Spain found me as poor in pocket as when I entered the Cuban service. Soon thereafter quite a number of get-rich-quick propositions were made to me; but, as is the rule with such schemes, they involved infractions of the law. By that I mean the moral law as well as the law which represents the will of the people. There is a law against filibustering; but it is an antiquated instrument, and, as it stands, I do not believe that most Americans approve it. There is no doubt in my mind that if the question as to whether I was right or wrong in my filibustering activities could have been put to a popular vote, the majority, and a large majority at that, would have been in my favor. But, however that may be, my conscience does not trouble me, whereas it would have bothered me a lot if I had taken up anything that contravened any other law.

Naturally enough, most of the proposals that were made by men who wished to become my partners concerned smuggling; but it was

smuggling of a very different kind from that with which I was familiar. In one scheme, which was most persistently urged on me, it was suggested that I reverse the contraband route by surreptitiously importing Chinamen into the United States from Cuba in wholesale quantities, but at retail rates.

The plan, as it was presented with more or less eloquence, provided that I was to be given command of a smart schooner with which to carry cargoes of Celestials from an obscure point on the south coast of Cuba to an equally remote place on the north shore of the Gulf of Mexico. The shipments were to be assembled and placed on board by my proposed partner, and, as Chinamen were free to come and go as they pleased in Cuba, there would have been no difficulty on that point. While I was to advise on every move that was made, I was to be directly responsible only, as in the old filibustering days, for the navigation of the ship and the landing of the cargoes. Our passengers were to be met by representatives of the Chinese syndicate in New York, who would supply them with forged papers giving them the right to reside in the United States and attend to their distribution. Our contract would be completed the moment they set foot on shore.

I was to be paid several hundred dollars—I have forgotten exactly how much, but I believe it was three hundred dollars—for every China-

man we landed, and, as we could have carried several hundred of them on each trip, we could soon have accumulated a fortune. In fact, by flying the Cuban flag and changing the point of debarkation often enough to avert suspicion, we could have imported as many Chinamen as were wanted. I needed the money, right enough, and I had no prejudices against the Chinese themselves, but I did have a pronounced objection to making money in that way. This objection extended to other suggestions of a similar nature, which came from men with visions of dishonest or dishonorable wealth.

There was one proposition, however, while it might have been said to contemplate the setting at naught of another international law, did no offense to my sense of right and wrong, and I entered into it cheerfully and enthusiastically. It was the rescue of Captain Alfred Dreyfus, the martyr of France, from Devil's Island, and I have always regretted that the French government, though doubtless without any suspicion of what was afoot, prevented me from carrying it out. Incidentally, this unintentional interference deprived me of half a million dollars, which would have earned me the rest to which I sometimes felt I was entitled.

In the spring of 1899, soon after my return from the trip to Havana with the *Brinckerhoff*, I was summoned to Jacksonville by a message from Mr. Huau, who was in charge of revolutionary

affairs in the South when the Cubans were fighting for their freedom. He told me he had been approached by a Frenchman who, to protect him from any embarrassment, will be known here only as Monsieur X, who wished to secure the release of Captain Dreyfus by kidnapping him. Monsieur X represented a party of wealthy French Jews who, despairing of ever securing a fair trial for the famous exile, had raised a fund of one million dollars with which to procure his release from his revolting confinement. They proposed that he be landed in the United States, incognito, of course, and go to some quiet place where he could live in peace and comfort pending the outcome of their continued efforts toward his vindication. The reward for his release was to be paid when he was landed on American soil. Monsieur X had come to Mr. Huau through channels which carried confidence; but, being a prudent business man, the Cuban patriot had investigated the Frenchman thoroughly before sending for me, and satisfied himself that the facts were as they had been stated. Mr. Huau knew the names of at least some of the men who had contributed to the million-dollar fund; but I did not ask him for them, as his guarantee that the proposition was genuine was all I needed.

From what he had heard of my activities Monsieur X believed I was the man to plan and command the expedition; but before making

any advances he had deemed it wise to consult Mr. Huau as to my character. What Mr. Huau said must have been satisfactory, for Monsieur X authorized him to submit the proposition to me, with the offer that if I would wrest Captain Dreyfus from his captors he would divide the million dollars with me, after all necessary expenses had been deducted.

First pledging me to secrecy, regardless of the outcome of our interview, Mr. Huau gave me the facts, much more in detail than they are stated here, and then asked me if I would engage in such an undertaking, and, if so, whether I believed it would succeed. I told him it appealed to me very strongly, for, like most Americans, I felt that Dreyfus was being persecuted; that I sympathized with him; and that I had no doubt his rescue could be accomplished. The fact that it was generally considered impossible merely meant that it was not guarded against, and, therefore, made it more easy. The amount of the reward seemed ridiculously large, and if I had not known Mr. Huau intimately I would have thought he was joking or had been imposed upon; but he assured me that the sum had been guaranteed, and undoubtedly would be paid when it was earned. His word passed with me, as with all who knew him, at par, so I told him to call it a bargain, and went to work.

Monsieur X was supplied, doubtless from sources within the French army, with a detailed

map of Devil's Island and full information concerning the conditions of the captain's confinement; the number and habits of his guards; the hours at which the men who were supposed to keep their eyes on him, day and night, were changed; the paths patrolled by the sentries, and the location of all the buildings and the character of the ground around them. This enabled us to attack the problem with exact knowledge of the situation. The detachment of troops on the island at that time numbered less than fifty men, and it was considered in Paris that even that small force was larger than was really necessary.

It had been stated in the press that Dreyfus was to be shot if so much as an attempt was made to rescue him. We had reason to believe that this report was circulated only to discourage any activity in that direction, and that no such order had ever been issued. It was true, however, that the commanding officer on the island had instructions to shoot the captain rather than to permit him to escape or be rescued. This made it necessary for us to strike so suddenly and decisively that Dreyfus would be safe in our hands before the command for his execution could be given and carried out. Anything like a secretive rescue was out of the question. What was required was a quick and unexpected blow delivered by a force large enough to take command of the situation in a moment, or, at

the worst, cause the guards to think about saving their own lives in place of sacrificing that of their prisoner.

The only practicable plan, I concluded, was to throw seventy-five or one hundred heavily armed men ashore at night, without any warning, and take temporary possession of the island in a jiffy. Fifty men, of the kind that I knew where to put my hands on, would have been enough; but I proposed to overwhelm the Frenchmen rather than to take the smallest chance of things going wrong. By consulting the chart I found there was deep water right up to the bank on the side of the island which it was necessary for us to reach, and I figured that we could run a ship well inshore and land our men in boats close to the improvised prison before we were seen. After that it would be a rush for the house in which Dreyfus was confined, and, perhaps, a fight, in which the odds would be all on our side. With the rescue accomplished our men were to return to the boats as quickly as possible, and, to cover their retreat, I expected to mount a couple of Gatling guns on the forward deck of our ship, with which we could sweep the shore. I intended to make the landing about one o'clock in the morning, at which hour all but the captain's personal guards would be sound asleep, and the chances were that the work would be done so quickly that there would be little oppo-

sition; but our men were to be prepared for a battle.

In casting about for a suitable vessel I found just what we wanted in a private yacht that was laid up at Charleston, South Carolina. She belonged to a New York man who had tired of her, and was open for charter or sale. She was a beautiful craft, two hundred feet over all, and with a draught of a little less than fifteen feet, and could do nineteen knots an hour or better, which was fast enough to keep clear of any French warships stationed at Cayenne, French Guiana, or Martinique that might try to follow us. She could not carry coal enough to take her to the island and back again; but that was not an objection, as we had to have another ship anyway. I proposed to charter her, in the name of a friend of Mr. Huau who was willing to enter into the conspiracy to that extent, without knowing or suspecting what the conspiracy was, and put all of my own men aboard of her, so that, with her mission accomplished, there would be no talk of what we had done. Frank Pagluchi, the Cuban revolutionary marine expert, was to have been her chief engineer; and he was actually engaged to serve in that capacity. After Captain Dreyfus had been rescued the yacht was to have been turned over to the man in whose name she had been chartered, and he and Mr. Huau were to have gone on a cruise until the end of the charter period.

As an auxiliary ship I intended to charter a Norwegian tramp steamer that was lying at New York. She was to meet the yacht one hundred miles north of Devil's Island with a fresh supply of coal, the landing party, and two Gatling guns. After her cargo had been transferred to a ship painted a different color and bearing a different name from that with which she left Charleston the tramp was to go on her way, while the yacht proceeded, after dark, to Devil's Island.

This plan was all worked out in detail, and we were just preparing to put it into execution when the cruiser *Sfax* unexpectedly visited the island in June and took Captain Dreyfus back to France, where, three months later, he was pardoned by President Loubet, following the Scotch verdict of the court-martial at Rennes. If he had been left on the island for another month we would have taken him off, under conditions much more picturesque than those attending his removal by the *Sfax*, and I would have spent the rest of my life in luxury. By the same token it would have been spent in idleness, so, perhaps, it is as well that our plan did not meet with the success it deserved.

My half million had gone glimmering, and I realized that in fighting the battles of others I had neglected my own. Therefore, I turned at last, with my ambition for adventures still not wholly satisfied, to the eternal battle of all mankind. Several ships were offered to me, and I

might have returned to my old occupation of a Hell Gate pilot; but, on account of my age and rheumatism, which had resulted from much exposure, I preferred an easy berth in a warm climate. So I ran the steamship *Lassells* in the fruit trade between New York and Jamaica for nearly three years. During the latter part of this time Cuba elected her own officials, headed by President Palma, and they were preparing to take over the government.

The last thing that was in my mind was to ask the Cubans for anything in the shape of a reward for my services to their cause. I much preferred to leave it entirely to them to act on the promises they had made, when they saw fit. I had not even intended to visit them during the celebration incident to the attainment of their independence; but it happened that I was sent to Havana in May, 1902—in which month President Palma was inaugurated and the government transferred to the Cubans—to bring the wreck of the steamship *Banes* to New York.

Mr. Palma, hearing that I was in the city, sent for me and made me promise to return to Cuba as soon as possible. He said one of his first acts as President would be to send a message to Congress recommending that my services to the revolution be memorialized; and he intimated, if he did not say so in so many words, that as soon as a navy could be established I would be put at its head. In the mean time, he

assured me, I would be given a good position "among my war-time friends and with the government toward the establishment of which I had contributed so much," as he expressed it. Naturally, I was pleased, as I felt that he was displaying a real gratitude; a quality so often neglected that it has come to attract attention, whereas it should be the most natural thing in the world. I may add that though his subsequent deeds failed to square with his words, my opinion as to Mr. Palma's feelings and intentions has never changed.

I shall never forget what Horatio Rubens told Mr. Palma on the night before he was inaugurated. Mr. Rubens arrived that evening from Key West by a special boat to attend the ceremony, and was summoned to Mr. Palma's rooms, where he was lying in bed, exhausted by the preparatory festivities. He was all excitement, and talked half hysterically of the celebration that was going on all around him.

"The great moment is close at hand," he declared. "The hour for which we have been fighting for years is almost here. Cuba is coming into her own. And such enthusiasm! The world has never seen anything like it."

"Yes," assented Rubens, in his good-naturedly cynical way, "until to-morrow."

"No, no!" shouted Palma. "For all time. You do not know; you have not seen it! Why do you say only until to-morrow?"

"Because the reaction will begin then," re-

plied Rubens, seriously. "Patriotism is mankind's most latent virtue. It is displayed only in a crisis. Then it becomes dormant again. Cuba has passed through a great crisis, and the reaction will be just as great. That is the law of human nature. So long as the war was on, every man who fought for Cuba was as good as any other man. With the acquisition of what they fought for, every man will return to the thing he was doing before he enlisted in the war. The demagogue will return to his mob, the outlaw to his violence and crime, and every man who does not get what he considers his share of the spoils of conquest will become your active enemy. It is all right to-day; perhaps it will be all right to-morrow; but after that—who knows? Your people are still ignorant of self-government. They have got to learn the sovereignty of the popular will, without which no free government can be maintained. The very richness of the island will prove its greatest danger —there is wealth enough to arouse the lust of every ambitious leader. They cannot all be satisfied. I hope it may prove that I am mistaken, but I fear there are still dark days ahead for Cuba. I do not congratulate you, but I most earnestly wish you well."

Mr. Palma vigorously combated this view, but he was unable to shake Mr. Rubens's convictions. Rubens contended that the Americans should have retained supervisory control of the

island for at least ten years, and, better, twenty, and taught the Cubans how to administer their own affairs; while Palma argued that they had already demonstrated their ability to govern themselves. There the conversation ended.

Many people believe that Mr. Palma himself was the first to discredit the views which he then expressed; that in his administration of Cuban affairs he failed to display the degree of confidence in his own people which they felt he had a right to expect from them. To this fact, more than anything else, perhaps, may be attributed his downfall and the second American intervention.

True to my promise to Mr. Palma, I returned to Havana immediately after the delivery of the battered hulk of the *Banes* in New York, and was given command of the revenue cutter *Maceo*, with the understanding that it was merely a temporary position, and that I would soon be given a much better place. The chief of the cutter service did not know much about ships. Furthermore, he complained because I did not write out my reports in Spanish instead of in English, and our relations soon became so inharmonious that I telegraphed him my resignation. Mr. Palma heard of it and sent for me again. He explained that he was preparing to have things done that would result to my permanent benefit. Until his plans could be carried out he asked me to accept a position as pilot at Havana. There his activities in my behalf

apparently ended. But, appreciating the difficulties which he soon encountered and the complexities of a new government by a people who had known nothing but despotism until a short time before, I did not blame him, nor do I now, for his inability to keep his altogether voluntary promises.

Subsequently a law was passed, and became operative during the second American occupation, requiring that all pilots should be Cuban citizens. It was suggested that I comply with it to retain my post; but I refused to surrender my American citizenship. Some of the Cubans who had served with me during the revolution reported the facts to Governor Magoon, without my knowledge, and, by his direction, a new license was issued to me, in which the requirement of Cuban citizenship was waived.

And so I am still a pilot. The work is not hard, for piloting at Havana is as simple as transporting in New York Harbor at slack water, and I like the Cuban climate. I have no regrets, and cherish no disappointments. If I have not acquired a great deal of money, I have accumulated that greater treasure—a fund of satisfactory memories. I have done the things which came to my hand in the best way that I knew how; and that, after all, is ambition's best fulfilment.

THE END

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